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Esquire

THE GENIUS ISSUE

28 of the **Best** people **and** their **Brightest** ideas—like the doctor who can **Fix a Heart Attack** and a scientist who can **Raise the Dead**, and brilliant innovators who are tackling **Energy, Water, Terrorism**, and—about time!—video games, *Lost*, and **Cheap-Ass Beer**.



PLUS: **VINCE VAUGHN** brings the happy (even if he *is* a little worried).

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Why is everybody having **Sex in Public**? Page 50

The Crash of '08: Some perspective, some recriminations, and a forecast. Page 84

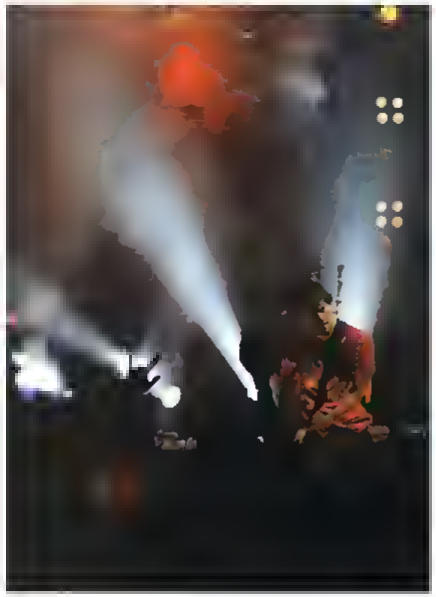
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"EVERYONE HAS A CONCERT STORY."

nosebleeds, and then move down. We'd keep an eye on the crowd – look for no shows, people going home early – and then, we'd swoop right in. If someone came back to their seat, we just kept going. After all, no guts, no glory.

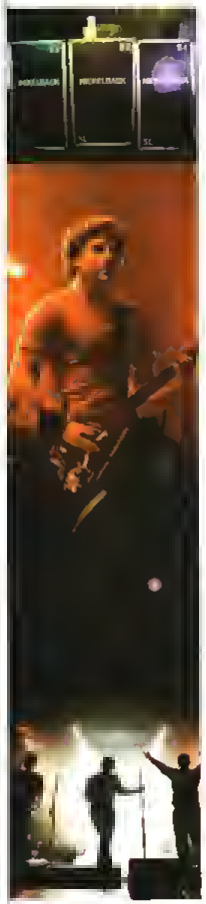


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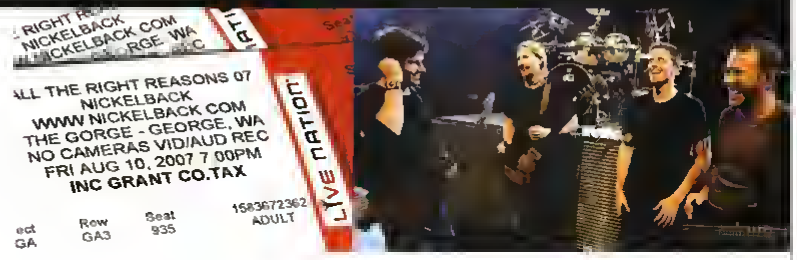
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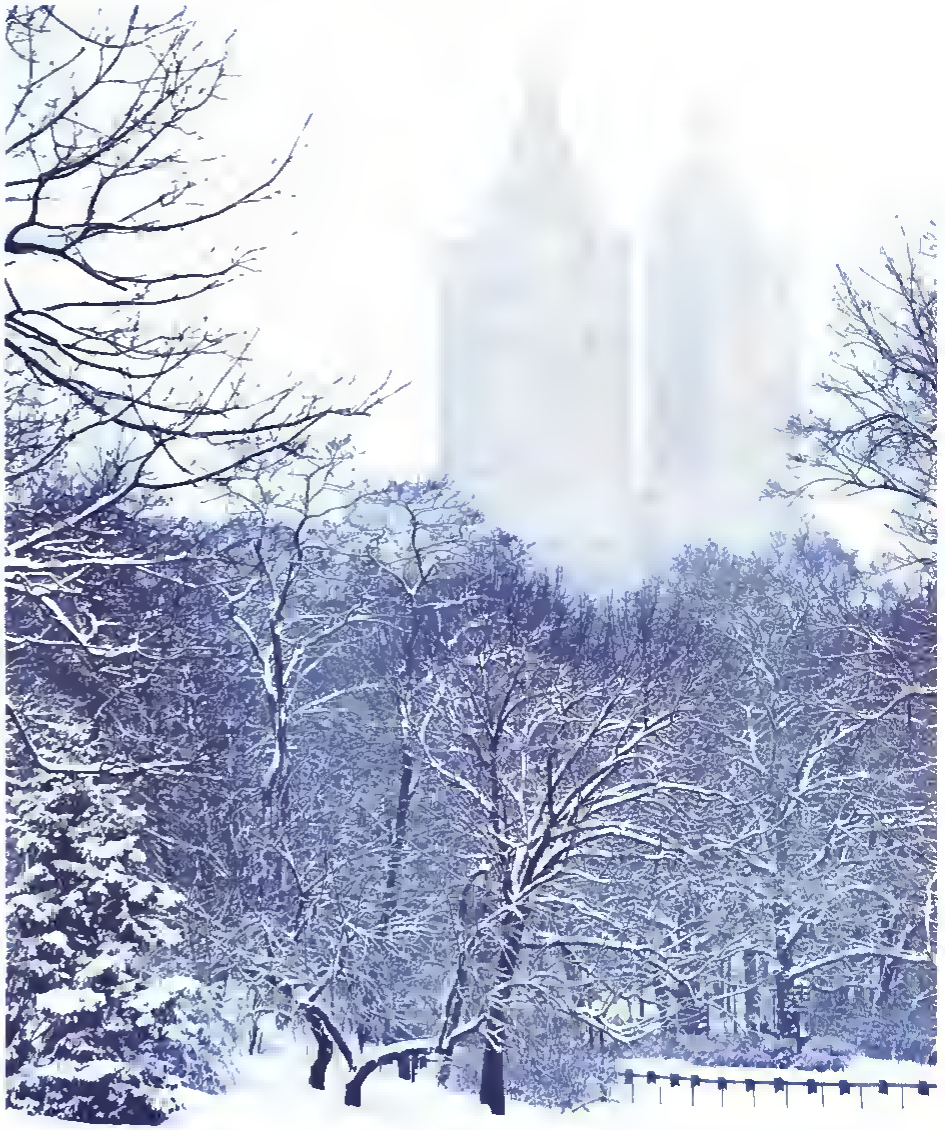
There are journeys that turn into legends. Bahamas Islands 10 07

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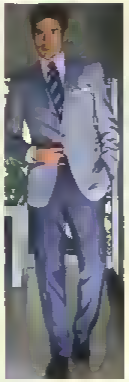


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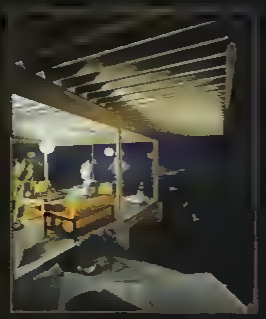
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OR THE COVER: VINCE VAUGHN PHOTOGRAPHED EXCLUSIVELY FOR ESQUIRE BY JARE CRESSUM. PRODUCED BY EMILY ROTH FOR PRODUCIT. STYLING BY ALIX HESTER FOR THE GERSH AGENCY. GROOMING BY CHERYL NICK. PROP STYLING BY FI CAMPBELL JOHNSON. TWO-BUTTON WOOL SUIT BY BOSS BLACK. COTTON SHIRT AND SILK TIE BY HUGO BOSS; LEATHER BELT BY ALLEN EDMONDS

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This Way In

THIS MONTH IN THIS WAY IN: *Our very own Jeopardy! questions (page 28), one of our contributors wins an Emmy (page 32) and gets made into a puppet (page 36), Bryan Anderson's movie debut (page 36), and a heartfelt apology to a Great Lake (page 28).*

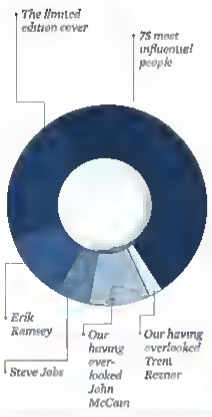
Esquire 75

21st CENTURY BEGINS NOW

In case we haven't mentioned it, October was a big month for us: It marked our 75th anniversary. To celebrate, we produced the world's first e-ink magazine cover and declared the belated start of a new century.



WHAT YOU WROTE ABOUT



NOT COUNTING PAUL COONEY'S, SOME OF THE MOST GENEROUS LETTERS WE'VE GOTTEN IN 75 YEARS

Our anniversary issue was about looking forward, not back, so we highlighted people we think will be instrumental in shaping the coming years ("The 75 Most Influential People of the 21st Century"). Along with profiles of honorees including Apple CEO Steve Jobs ("Steve Jobs and the Portal to the Invisible") basketball—and business—iconoclast LeBron James ("LeBron James's Magnum Sized, Ultrashiny, Nike-Powered Lawn Mower to the Next Century") and Louisiana governor and Republican all-star Bobby Jindal ("Bobby Jindal: All-American") were original works from artists such as Mark Bradford (above) and the story of Erik Ramsey ("The Unspeakable Odyssey of the Motionless Boy") who, since a car accident in 1999, has been able to communicate only with his eyes.

The seventy-fifth-anniversary issue is, pound for pound and word for word, the single best magazine I've ever had the pleasure of reading. Both the writing and the design are superb. I stored the issue in my attic so that one day I can show it to my children.

BRAD LEIBOWITZ
Los Angeles, Calif.

From the image of hermetically sealed[1] Jeans-and-Mock uniforms (*The Immaculate Threads*, by Dominic Wilcox) accompanying the Steve Jobs story to the poetic justice delivered via verse to Bill and Hillary, every bit of the October issue is evidence that, no matter how hard Google may try, no artificial intelligence can replace the sweaty, raw life that you humans slap on your pages. I have only one suggestion. In your list of influential people, you updated one of your old stories from the 1970s, "The Americanization of Rupert Murdoch." But you overlooked the element most in need of modernization—the headline. My suggestion would be, "The Rupert Murdochization of America." I'm looking forward to the 150th anniversary—even if I have to read it via a Google-ad-filled hologram.

AMANDA LONG
Falls Church, Va.

This was some of the most evocative and cathartic material you have ever published

CONTEXT-FREE HIGHLIGHT FROM A LETTER WE WON'T BE RUNNING "I once was fired for suggesting gremolata be put on a lamb dish."

(1) *Derived from the name Hermes Trismegistus, a mythical alchemist who had the ability to seal off vessels and treasure for protection. Although his name has inspired no popular terminology, Dave Arnold practices his own form of alchemy—with food. His story starts on page 158.*

WEAR THE BRA FLEET 2008. BY MARK BRADFORD. COURTESY OF SIKKEMA JENKINS &



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Esquire BIG BLACK BOOK 2008

CORRECTION!



IT HAS COME to our attention that we omitted a Great Lake on a map included in October's Contributors section. We promise you this was inadvertent. If we were going to purposefully exclude a Great Lake, it would have been Huron. And so to the perhaps concerned people of Michigan, Wisconsin, Illinois, and Indiana, we offer our heartfelt apologies and this assurance: The twenty-first century will, in fact, include Lake Michigan.

Most notable for me is Joshua Foer's piece on Erik Ramsey. The temerity Josh displays as a journalist—hell, as a human being—in actively immersing himself in this family's love, pain, and struggle is as rare as it is admirable. The Ramsey family's strength and Josh's illustration of it should serve to remind us all that our problems are like blessings in comparison.

CHRISTOPHER NIXON
Belleville, N.J.

Your profile of Bobby Jindal really captured the fascination that I have with him. I was living in New Orleans when he first ran for governor in 2003, and I remember discussing my conflicted feelings about him over beers[2] with friends. He was clearly the more qualified candidate, but I couldn't bring myself to vote for a creationist who opposes all forms of stem-cell research and abortion. Katrina would have been horrific no matter who was in office, but in the three years since, I've often wondered how much all the suffering would have been mitigated if he had won that first election. Although I would never vote for Governor Jindal myself, I don't mind him being in charge for a while.

MICHAEL BARTOLONE
Port Chester, N.Y.

Chuck Klosterman's "A Brief History of the Twenty-first Century" was both funny and brilliant. Kurt Vonnegut would be proud.

EDWIN BULGRIN
St. Petersburg, Fla.

I'd never read anything by Lisa Taddeo before. But based on her story about LeBron, were I not about to marry the woman of my dreams, I would seek her out to offer myself up as a companion.

CHAIS BRADDOCK
Fargo, N.Dak.

I was surprised to see that you included Rory Stewart and Parag Khanna over seasoned foreign-policy pros and thinkers such as Zbigniew Brzezinski, Henry Kissinger, and Robert Kaplan. They may not be young, dashing, or hip, but they're the real geopolitical experts truly shaping the globe with their influence. At least you included General Petraeus for some gravitas.

ROBERT DEMARQUEZ
Winter Springs, Fla.

Naturally, your most influential list would be cause for debate, but after a brief perusal I was stunned by just how stupid it [*continued on page 32*]

CONTEXT-FREE HIGHLIGHT FROM A LETTER WE WON'T BE RUNNING

"May the great Liberal defecate on your dumb mag."

ESQUIRE IN THE MEDIA

JEOPARDY!

The week of November 24, the brainy and generous people of Jeopardy! will include a category based on Esquire's seventy-five-year history. In anticipation of the event, we asked them to create an extra set of clues (answers?) just for us. Answers (questions?) are provided by our staff on page 30.

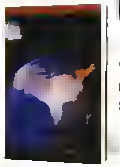
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VIETNAM WAR TALES LIKE "HELL SUCKS," BY ESQUIRE'S MICHAEL HERR, WERE ADAPTED IN PART BY JOHN MILIUS FOR THIS FILM'S SCRIPT.

IN 1978, AARON LATHAM WROTE "THE BALLAD OF THE" THIS FOR ESQUIRE, LATER TURNED INTO A JOHN TRAVOLTA FILM.

IN 1934, ESQUIRE FEATURED AN ARTICLE WRITTEN BY THIS RUSSIAN MARXIST; SIX YEARS LATER, HE WAS MURDERED IN MEXICO.



CONTRIBUTOR AWARDS

LEAST FRISKY SQUIRREL

"I pulled the trigger and saw a chunk of meat fly from [the squirrel] like a small red bird. He seemed to explode. There was the sound of rain through the trees as bits of him fell back to earth."

—From "Rhoda," one in a series of connected short stories that recount the history of a young man whose father takes his own life in David Vann's dark new book, Legend of a Suicide

(2) The best thing to drink with chili. At least, according to the winner of the 2007 Terlingua International Chili Championship, Debbie Ashman. For more from Ashmen, including a warning against stirring and an unexpected use of the word dump, *turn to page 62.*

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EDITOR'S LETTER

Pit of the Stomach



IT SHOULDN'T BE a surprise (but it always is) that there is one concern that trumps all others: money.

The Dow drops 30 or 40 percent, and in an instant, every other crisis in our culture pales in comparison, even after it rebounds. A couple months ago, the green ring of America was the dominant issue of our time. Prior to that, it was the war in Iraq. Or Guantánamo or wiretapping or Alberto Gonzales.

All those things can seem impossibly distant from our daily lives. Our economy can seem distant, too, until one of those days comes when we are forced to realize that we are helplessly tied to what happens on the Dow and the FTSE and the Nikkei and Hang Seng and DAX. When we realize that we are at the mercy of the herd, and when the herd panics, the pain is felt by us right through our wallets and into the pits of our stomachs.

The thing is, we all knew a reckoning was coming. I remember being in Scottsdale, Arizona, and driving through vast developments of homes, each allegedly worth millions, each unoccupied. Every house was either a third home or an investment opportunity. And their escalating "value" was a lot of what our national "prosperity" was built on.

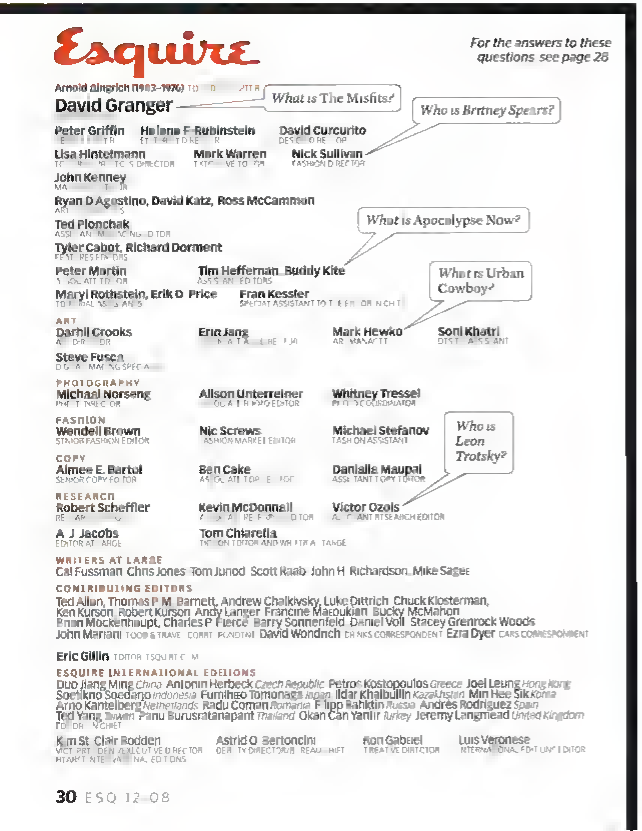
Last year, *The New York Times* reported that an analysis of 2005 tax data revealed that the top three hundred thousand earners in the country had made almost as much money as the bottom 150 million. Individuals were making hundreds of millions of dollars without producing much of anything, except, as you'll read in Richard Medley's piece on page 84, formulas for disaster.

Maybe good will come of our current troubles. Certainly we as a society will be forced to live within our means for a while. But beyond that, maybe some of the crises that dominated our lives just recently are actually being addressed. Clearly, "going green" by using more efficient lightbulbs wasn't going to make a dent in climate change. But the steep decline in the burning of fossil fuels that accompanies a downturn in manufacturing—especially in China and India—will do far more than we could have gotten people to volunteer for.

The crisis in energy pricing that was bankrupting everyone (and turning people like Hugo Chavez into power brokers) is certainly well on the way to being mitigated. My nightmare scenario, though, is that GM and Nissan and Toyota will all roll out their electric cars right on schedule in 2010, just as the price of a gallon of gas returns to $1.29.

Ach. In times like these (have there ever been times like these?), we hope better times are coming. We hope. And one token of that hope is this issue, in which we highlight our nation's Best and Brightest, people whose ideas we pray will power a better tomorrow.

—DAVID GRANGER





YOUR DAD GAVE OUT THE NICKNAMES

It was your Dad's crew. He was the president. And CEO. And when Big Monk fixed him a cocktail, it was in a rocks glass. With Canadian Club whisky. Because it tasted good. And your Dad liked it that way.

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RECOGNIZING THE RECOGNITION OF OUR CONTRIBUTORS



AT THE SIXTIETH Primetime Emmy Awards in September our own Digital Man Barry Sonnenfeld was awarded his first prime-time Emmy (as opposed to the daytime Emmy he got in 1985) for his work on the ABC show *Pushing Daisies*. He won in the category of Outstanding Directing for a Comedy Series, against notable competition *30 Rock*, *The Office*, *Entourage* and *Flight of the Conchords*. We're very proud of him, even if he didn't mention us in his acceptance speech. For more award-worthy work from Barry, turn to page 111

[*continued from page 28*] was: What collection of seventy-five idiots came up with this crap?

PAUL COONEY
Bronx, N.Y.

The number of idiots was actually closer to twenty, many of whom are listed on page 30 —*Editors*

THINGS YOU CAN DO WITH YOUR FLASHING COVER

To produce our e-ink cover, we worked with consulting firm Nicobar Group and E Ink, the company responsible for the technology behind the electronic displays used in the Sony and Kindle electronic readers. The limited-edition run of a hundred thousand copies sold on newsstands and in bookstores in select cities throughout the United States.

I love the anniversary cover. You started a whole new way to view magazines, and I hope others follow suit. To extend the battery's life, you could place thin, flexible solar panels on the front cover. Hooking the solar panels to rechargeable batteries could make the cover last forever, or at least until the screen dies.

EDWARD RODRIGUEZ
Miramar, Fla.

Is there any way to turn off the e-ink cover to keep it from wearing out?

CHARLES SIMPSON
Romeoville, Ill.

Without taking it apart, not really. The good news is, when the batteries run out, the screen won't simply go blank. The cells remain illuminated in whatever pattern they held when they received the final electrical impulse. Otherwise, there's always Edward's idea. That sounded pretty easy. —*Editors*

UNLESS, OF COURSE, YOU DIDN'T GET ONE

Congratulations on your seventy-fifth anniversary. My father was a subscriber in the fifties and sixties, and I have

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GREAT DRESSER, GREAT MAN



THIS SEPTEMBER, we presented the five finalists for 2008's Best Dressed Real Man in America competition. Live on the *Today* show, we announced the winner: Kenyatte Nelson (right), a thirty-one-year-old brand manager from Cincinnati. Along with the chance to hit on actress Kerry Washington in the *Today* show greenroom, Nelson's win involved some prizes, including eight hours of private-jet use from Bombardier, a trip to Switzerland, and an IWC Portuguese chronograph. Plus he received a new $10,000 wardrobe, which inspired him to donate items from his existing wardrobe to charity. It also inspired him to partner with an organization called Career Gear, which provides interview suits and job counseling to men in need. As much as we respect Nelson's style, we're even more impressed with his generosity.





Meet the curvaceously scene stealing all-new Volkswagen CC.

They say you shouldn't judge a book by its cover. The same can be said of the all new 2.0 Turbo Volkswagen CC. Yes, its sleek, stealthy curves turn heads and garner attention. But there's more to the CC's story than pleases the eye. Combine those curves with a seamless body and a low swooping roofline, and the result is an aerodynamic marvel with a drag coefficient lower than a bullet. It's what helps the CC earn its Autobahn bred stripes, as well as score an impressive gas-sipping 31mpg on the highway.* Add a Carefree Maintenance Program** and you may be shocked to learn the CC starts at just $26,790. Form, function, fuel efficient, and fast. **It's what the people want.**

Das Auto.

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been reading since the early eighties. As a subscriber, I wanted to thank you for not sending me the edition with the wonderful electronic cover. As a fan of technology, I would have enjoyed playing with it. Thank you very much for sparing me, a loyal subscriber, all that enjoyment.

KENN FONG
Alameda, Calif.

To you and all our subscribers, we apologize. You deserve the best of what we do. But because of the high cost of making the e-ink cover, we could produce only a hundred thousand copies of it, a fraction of our normal distribution, and offer them as a special newsstand edition (and for a higher price) next to our normal newsstand edition. The issues themselves were identical in every other respect. Of course, all stories in every issue will disappear when the batteries die (just kidding). —*Editors*

ELSEWHERE IN THE BIN

The shrub recommended in your "Ask a Landscaper" column (Man at His Best, September), *Prunus laurocerasus Schipkaensis*, or cherry laurel, sounds exactly like what I need to close in our driveway for privacy. But I live on Cape Cod and can't find anyone who has this plant. Can you help me out?

RICH PESCE
Eastham, Mass.

Landscaper Frank Conley responds: If you've had trouble finding cherry laurel on Cape Cod, it's likely because you're on the edge of what's considered that plant's hardiness zone. The USDA puts out a zone map of the U.S. based on average annual minimum temperatures that serves as a guide to which plants will thrive in what parts of the country (usna.usda.gov/Hardzone/ushzmap.html). But it's just a guideline, and the cherry laurel has been pushing north over the last few years, as winters have gotten milder. If you're willing to take a little risk, you could special order the plants through your local garden center. Now, you might see some dieback that first winter, but often you'll see them bounce back strong in the spring, and then they're fine. One thing I'd recommend is a topical treatment called Wilt Pruf that protects plants against frostbite[13]—it's like a coat for the cold weather. If you plant them right and use Wilt Pruf, I like your chances.

Shortly after appearing on the cover of your September issue, New England Patriots quarterback Tom Brady got injured and was forced to miss the entire season. Is there now such a thing as an Esquire-cover jinx? I swear to God, if you put a New Orleans Saint on the cover, I will cancel my subscription.

JEFF O'REAR
Hattiesburg, Miss.

In "75 Years of Esquire Corrections" (October), you said, "The Sexiest

THE SELECTIVE UPDATE
BRYAN ANDERSON



SINCE APPEARING on our cover in January 2007, Iraq war veteran and triple amputee Bryan Anderson got to meet Mickey Rourke, Gary Sinise, too, but that doesn't matter quite as much because Sinise isn't starring in Darren Aronofsky's new movie, *The Wrestler* (out December 19). Rourke is. And so is Anderson. After Aronofsky's stunt coordinator read Anderson's Esquire interview (in which he mentions an interest in becoming a stuntman), he decided to put him in the movie. In his scene, Anderson hands one of his prosthetic legs to Rourke and encourages him to hit his opponent with it. Look for it about halfway in. We hope the Academy is paying attention.

BARRY, ONLY SMALLER



THE INSPIRATION for this month's Digital Man Gift Guide (page 111) was the 1960s stop-motion special *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer*. But instead of starring Rudolf or an elf who'd rather be a dentist, our version is hosted by a seven-inch replica of our tech writer, Barry Sonnenfeld. The puppet was created by Bant Image Lab, whose past work includes stop-motion films for *Saturday Night Live* and big-headed likenesses of Ray Romano, Regis Philbin, and Kelly Ripa. Little Barry is a traditional puppet, with a head of hard, hollow plastic and a body made of bendable foam and wire. Regular-sized Barry we hope is flattered.

13) *With severe cases of frostbite in people, it's important for the victim to drink warm fluids. For drinking options in other, less painful situations, turn to page 66.*

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THOSE RESPONSIBLE: DANIEL BOULUD

THIS MONTH'S Man at His Best includes a special contributor renowned French chef and restaurateur Daniel Boulud who was kind enough to lend his palate to the Esquire Chili Cook off as a visiting judge Although you won't find chili on the menu of his New York City flagship restaurant Daniel (which celebrates its fifteenth anniversary this year) Boulud was already quite familiar with the Texas staple It's commonly served to his staff as an after hours house meal Probably the best chili he ever had however was in 2001 when he helped



serve food to rescue workers at the World Trade Center Unfortunately he forgot to ask for the recipe He can't make that mistake this month and neither can you since chili recipes from three of the United States' most impressive young chefs along with Boulud's opinion of each, start on page 59

Woman Alive 2008, who lives in rural Kentucky, is the sister of one of our interns. However, rules prevent us from awarding the honor to an employee's family member, so we'll probably go with some actress/model type." Thank you for confirming what all of us in Kentucky have always known The Sexiest Woman Alive lives in Kentucky, not Hollywood

LLOYD SPEAR
Vanceburg, Ky

While that might be true we're still a little concerned with how she might do outside of her hardiness zone. —Editors

READER OF THE MONTH

I'd never read your magazine before, because I have other things to do, and, to be brutally honest, I thought it was going to be rubbish But a few weeks ago, my flight home was delayed, and in my desperation, I searched for a magazine of interest I settled on your August issue As I read through it, I was astounded to find something quality I was flabbergasted at the hilarious jokes and illustrations and some of the best articles[4] I've ever read especially Brian Mockenhaupt's on the attempted escape from Kinross prison ("The Tunnel") I'm a seventeen-year-old kid with some sort of pipe dream[5] to be a journalist, so it meant a lot to find a well-rounded publication.

I don't really know why I wrote this e-mail and sort of feel like an ass for doing it, but I wanted to thank you for providing me some joy It has now become a dream of mine to work at your magazine (The list of dreams is long, so don't feel too flattered.)

AUGUST THOMPSON
Los Angeles, Calif

SOMETHING TO DO AT ESQUIRE.COM

Figure out what to do when you're not at esquire.com Like read. In case you find the idea of entering a library without a definite game plan daunting—or even if you don't—we've gone ahead and compiled a list of the seventy-five books we think every man should read (esquire.com/75-books). It's biased, yes, and incomplete. But it's a good start Pick one. Read it. Or just carry it around to impress people.

Letters to the editor may be mailed to The Sound and the Fury P.O. Box 1704 Sandusky Ohio 44870 Also, Esquire encourages the use of e-mail (to esquire@hearst.com or via the Web at esquire.com/talk) and fax (212-649-4305) Include your full name address, and daytime phone number Letters may be edited for length and clarity For subscription questions, please go to service.esquire.com.

CONTEXT-FREE HIGHLIGHT FROM A LETTER WE WON'T BE RUNNING

"Guess what? You've just incurred the wrath of the NRA."

[4] For excerpts from the seven best articles we've ever published turn to page 75 [5] What some people considered the now-realized aspirations of Dean Kamen Read what he's up to on page 98.

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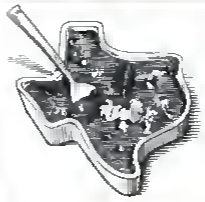
1. THE CULTURE» Sean Penn as Harvey Milk, the songs of the year.
2. THE INSTRUCTIONS» The Great Esquire Chili Cook-Off And Sex.
3. STYLE» How to stay warm and dry and not look ridiculous.

THE VOCABULARY

(Terms and ideas you will encounter in the pages that follow. Great for conversation.)

• **the great bedraggling** *n*: A PERIOD THAT BEGAN IN THE MID 2000s WITH THE PROLIFERATION OF EASILY UPLOADED WEB VIDEOS, WHICH HAVE MADE FAMOUS PEOPLE SEEM UNATTRACTIVE AND NONFAMOUS PEOPLE REALLY UNATTRACTIVE. (SEE PAGE 50)

• **UNREAL DEATH** *n*: A manner of death so unlikely, shocking, and brutal that it overshadows the life of the deceased. (SEE PAGE 42.)


FIG 2

• **CHILI** *n*: Fundamentally, a stew comprising bits of spiced meat and sometimes beans. Easily corrupted. (SEE PAGE 59)

• **DUMP** *n*: A blend of chili spices added at precise moments in the chili-cooking process. Done either two or three times, depending on the chef (SEE PAGE 62)

• **engineered helplessness** *n*: SURREPTITIOUSLY PLACED INFORMATION IN A CONVERSATION THAT SUGGESTS A FLAW AND BAITS A WOMAN INTO SYMPATHETICALLY ATTEMPTING TO FIX A MAN (SEE PAGE 70)

• **BARREL PROBLEM** *n*: The effect that the heat in the tropics (as opposed to the heat in, say, Scotland) has on liquor stored in wooden casks, like rum (as opposed to, say, Scotch). Often results in rum tasting significantly less wonderful than other aged liquors (like, say, Scotch) (SEE PAGE 66)

• **NOLO THE MONKEYS** *n* 1. A request made by a bar patron that specifies his cocktail should come without tiny umbrellas, ornamental fruit, or small plastic monkeys ("I'll take a daiquiri. Hold the monkeys.") 2. A euphemism for any request to eschew unnecessary accoutrements ("I'll take the Sebring. But hold the monkeys.") (SEE PAGE 66)


FIG 3

• **RESTRAINED** *adj*: An increasingly rare quality among modern architects characterized by not designing a ridiculous building just because one can. (SEE PAGE 46.)


FIG 1

• **MOLIAN SNUO** *n*: The puzzling phenomenon whereby beautiful, talented, charming actresses (e.g., Keri Russell, Leelee Sobieski, Gretchen Mol) are not in more things (SEE PAGE 48)

GOOD IDEAS FEATURED IN THIS SECTION:

- GO SEE *MILK* (PG 42)
- ROAST AND GRIND WHOLE SPICES YOURSELF (PG 62)
- SHOW SOME HUMILITY EVERY NOW AND THEN (PG 70)
- TRY SIPPING RUM, NEAT. BUT FOR THE LOVE OF GOD, MAKE SURE IT'S THE GOOD STUFF. (PG 66)
- AND BY "GOOD" WE MEAN SOMETHING OTHER THAN THE STUFF YOUR COLLEGE GIRLFRIEND USED TO "PRE PARTY" WITH (PG 66)
- HAVE ANOTHER BOWL. EAT! (PG 62)


"When it gets warmer, it turns green." (ITALO ZUCCHELLI PAGE 77)

"This is chili you want to keep coming back to." (—DANIEL BOULUD PAGE 64)





(Film)

How Harvey Milk Was Finally Assassinated

In *Milk*, Sean Penn and Gus Van Sant dignify the pathetic death of an important man

By Chris Jones

Harvey Milk had a superhero's name, and in a lot of ways in the most important ways, he led a superhero's life, but you probably haven't heard of Harvey Milk, because he was denied, until now, a superhero's end.

Milk, the first openly gay man to hold a major American political office—he was elected to San Francisco's Board of Supervisors in 1977—is the subject of *Milk*, a new film by Gus Van Sant. Sean Penn plays Milk and will be nominated for an Academy Award for it, probably because he makes out with a series of men, convincingly and often, including a romantic morning-after scene that depicts James Franco eating cake off his giant nose. But Penn would be better nominated because the notorious down-mouth smiles his way through the entire movie, joyous and likable even when there's nothing to be happy about: a bouncing, mincing, big-toothed hip pie queen, the embodiment of life's joy and potential, as Milk was, right up until the moment one of Milk's fellow supervisors shoots off his fingers, and then shoots him in the chest and then shoots him in the back of the head.

That killing, by Dan White, a holy-rolling ex-firefighter on a sugar high, has long been portrayed by gay-rights activists as an assassination—which, in turn, gave them permission to claim Harvey Milk as their Abraham Lincoln, their John F. Kennedy, their Martin Luther King. If only.

White was thorough in his rage, killing Mayor George Moscone while he was at it. (Josh Brolin, on a hell of a run, embodies the man come undone.) But he wasn't public about it. Had White killed Milk on San Francisco City Hall's grand staircase, blood pooling on the marble steps that Penn gleefully dances up and down—had Milk's death been as shamelessly theatrical as his life—then Milk might have become one of America's great stolen iconoclasts. Instead, White shot Milk alone, cornered in a dingy office behind a thick door closeted, where White felt he belonged. White didn't assassinate Milk; he murdered him, and America has never had a long or loving memory for men who die like dogs.

Van Sant and Penn, then, do Milk the greatest service here. While the film is not without its missteps, cluttered by camera gimmickry and the occasional fluff of a line, it finally gives Milk's murder an audience. It gives it scope. At that moment of awful climax, when it would have been too easy to blink, Van Sant goes the whole stomach-sick way with it. In superslow motion, we see Penn's face turn from bemusement to terror at Brolin's drawing the gun, and then we see and hear every bullet, every impact, every spatter and bro-

BOOKS WE WON'T BE CURLING UP WITH THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

Scared of Santa: Scenes of Terror in Toyland, by Denise Joyce and Nancy Watkins (Harper Paperbacks $10). *Fleece Navidad: A Knitting Mystery* by Maggie Sefton (Berkley, $24). *Holiday with a Vampire II*, by Merline Lovelace and Lori Devoti (Silhouette $5). *A Nascar Holiday 3*, by Liz Allison and Wendy Etherington (HQN, $7). *A Bodyguard for Christmas* by Donna Young (Harlequin $6). *Jesus: A Meditation on His Stories and His Relationships with Women* by Andrew Greeley (Forge Books $11). *Hot, Flat, and Crowded* by Thomas Friedman (Farrar Straus and Giroux $28).

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(Film)



Sean Penn as Harvey Milk, the first openly gay elected official in the U.S.

Ken bone, close up and agonizing. In his capturing of Milk's death, Van Sant freezes a moment that must have seemed, in the candlelight vigils that flooded the city's streets later that night, unreal. And the problem with unreal deaths is they can make the lives that led up to them seem unreal, too. That couldn't have happened, people think in their shock and their grief, and pretty soon they start thinking that way about the rest of the story, until it vanishes from memory, put away like a bad dream.

Now Harvey Milk has been outed. His death has been given its stage. That dingy office at city hall has been made into a box seat at the theater, an open-topped car on a Dallas street, the balcony of a Memphis motel. Van Sant's movie begins with Penn sitting alone at his kitchen table, speaking into a microphone plugged into a tape recorder, into which Milk spills the meaning of his hopeful life, "to be played only in the event of my death by assassination."

Now that tape can finally be played.

The Hall of Cultural Significance

The five most intriguing performances this month

SUCCESSFUL USE OF AN OVERUSED SETTING



The Holocaust, as the backdrop in *Defiance,* the story of three Jewish brothers (led by Daniel Craig) who flee to the Belorussian wilderness, join the resistance, and build an autonomous community of refugees. **See also: the Holocaust** in *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas,* about a boy who befriends a young prisoner through the fence of a concentration camp run by his father.

ACTRESS WHOSE NAME WE JUST IMAGE SEARCHED



Olga Kurylenko in the new Bond movie, *Quantum of Solace.* The potential hypersensitivity of the plot or hero (see Man at His Best: November) probably doesn't matter much when paired with a Ukrainian as lovely as this one. Director Marc Forster liked her so much he rewrote the character for her. **See also: Sheetal Sheth** in *I Can't Think Straight.*

SUDDENLY IMPORTANT UNIT OF MEASURE



Grams. French Laundry and Per Se chef Thomas Keller's incredibly precise *sous vide* (French for "under vacuum") cookbook *Under Pressure,* calls for ingredients such as 140 grams of water and 0.4 grams of ascorbic acid, as well as low temperature cooking times upwards of ten hours. Sadly, it looks like the days of adding a pinch of anything are over.

ACHIEVEMENT IN SUPPLICATION



The women of Liberia in the new documentary *Pray the Devil Back to Hell.* After a decade of civil war and brutal repression by Liberia's despotic president Charles Taylor, Liberian later sex stepped in. They prayed, staged sit-ins, refused sex, even made their own T-shirts. And two and a half years later, they did what the international community couldn't, and ousted Taylor.

INANIMATE OBJECT OF THE MONTH



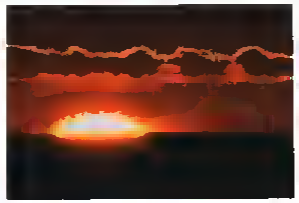
The yule log, as used by Stephen Colbert to explain his holiday cheer. "I'm so excited right now I'm sporting a yule log." *A Colbert Christmas: The Greatest Gift of All!* premieres on Comedy Central November 23, with special guests Elvis Costello and a grizzly bear. **See also: the landscape** in Cormac McCarthy's Oprah's Book Club turned Oscar-bait movie *The Road.*

(TV)

THE ENDORSEMENT: *SUNRISE EARTH*

What happens is: The sun rises. It's dark when the show starts, and it's light when it ends. It appears on the network HD Theater. The filmmakers feature one location at sunrise. The camera's mostly static, and there's no narration. For one hour, all you see and hear is (and this will seem mind-numbing) the sights and sounds of nature. An alligator in the Everglades floats into the frame. The sun rises. Glaciers cleave in Alaska. The sun rises. Human beings ride waves in Costa Rica. (But only two, because it's five in the morning.) The sun rises. The network airs *Sunrise Earth* in the morning, but what you want to do is DVR the show and watch it when you get home from work. With a drink. It will relax and reset you. Because it's an antidote not only to everything else happening on TV that night but to everything else that happened to you that day.

—ROSS McCAMMON



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Books

The New World

The 1,037 beautifully photographed buildings in *The Phaidon Atlas of 21st Century World Architecture* are a testament to everything that is right and really wrong in architecture today



The Ontario College of Art & Design's Sharpe Center is raised on stilts nine stories above street level to preserve views of a nearby park.

Architecture, especially the sort that lies far from the shadow of America's recent cultural and economic stagnation, is the best bellwether of innovation, a representation of the relative health of the imagination of the species. Enter *The Phaidon Atlas of 21st Century World Architecture* (Phaidon Press, $195), a lovingly bound, clearly written compendium, a Google Earth of the now for your coffee table. It's big enough (800 pages), encyclopedic enough (5,500 color illustrations), global enough (1,037 buildings by 653 architects in 89 countries) that it is both a distinct survey of the current cultural geography and something far more than a wet finger in the wind of contemporary design. And this volume reveals everything that is right and wrong in architecture today—the large and small the private and public, the grandly understated and the quietly obscene.

Truth is, most of it is happening elsewhere. You can bounce from a detailed study of Diego Montero's Scott House, a warm modernist forest home—the interior wood is left raw, and the exterior is painted to mimic the color of the surrounding gum trees—in the forests of Uruguay to the unbearably miraculous curl of the Millau Viaduct in France, perhaps the most beautiful bridge in creation. The work signifies a reverence for the spirit (like the House to Watch the Sunset, in Niger, a single brick column built on a desert oasis) and the spiritlessness of the time (witness the requisite Frank Gehry hotel that looks as if it were dropped from the undercarriage of a zeppelin and left to rot on a Spanish hillside).

Once, Europeans used atlases such as this one to witness the expansion, development, and discovery of the New World from their sitting rooms. Americans are in the sitting room now while the rest of the world builds. So we are left to judge. And whether the design efforts of this nascent century thrill you for their simplicity or suck the life out of your heart for their self-indulgence, every choice herein—richly detailed and lushly represented—is worthy of inclusion in this important inventory of design.

—TOM CHIARELLA



THE RULES

Rule No. 165: Terrorists tend to have subpar AV equipment. Rule No. 298: If you say, "I've got some bad news," somebody better be dead. Rule No. 330: Foods ending in "ito" are delicious. Rule No. 331: Also "eeto."

Music

THE 5 BEST SONGS YOU (PROBABLY) DIDN'T HEAR THIS YEAR

By Andy Langer

"JINGLE BELLS," Julian Koster It's been said that the violin is the closest instrument to the human voice, but we're going with the singing saw. In a perfect world, Koster's ultracreepy take on this yuletide standard would be in heavy rotation at Home Depot. Best of all, no bells. Just saw.

"ONE LAST ROUND," Ron Sexsmith Rarely has the notoriously meticulous Sexsmith crafted a better melody and narrative than this one—in which what seems like a gorgeous drinking song on first pass reveals itself as a sharp comment on American consumption.

"GROUNDS FOR DIVORCE," Elbow As it should, this tightly wound Zeppelinesque foot-stomper reeks like a bartender's rubber mat. It's about a bender at the corner pub, in which the "seldom-seen kid" in the chorus is the dead friend they're toasting. Cheers.

"SHE LEFT ME FOR JESUS," Hayes Carll "She says I should find Him and I'll know peace at last/If I ever find Jesus I'm kickin' His ass." Pansy-ass country radio programmers screamed blasphemy, but the true offense was denying their audience this song.

"AUCTIONEER," the Broken West There's a glut of fashion-obsessed L.A. bands. This one uses the piano, hand claps, tambourines, and lush choruses—but only in short bursts. Any remaining Matthew Sweet and Jellyfish fanatics will fall for this tale of an intimidating chanteuse.



Funny* Joke from a Beautiful Woman

As told by **GRETCHEN MOL**



WHY SHOULD you never tell a joke while ice fishing? Because the ice will crack up

ABOUT THE JOKESTER

Gretchen Mol seems confused about what "sexy" is ("funny" too, but that's why we have the disclaimer). "Sexy doesn't come naturally to me," she says. "It's not really who I am." In the ABC time-travel drama *Life on Mars*, the 36-year-old actress plays a buff, toned-up 1970s policewoman, and her ability to pull off even that look seems natural enough to us. Admitting that her cop uniform is a "little sexy," she says she finds it a relief after the costumes required for her previous roles, including *The Notorious Bettie Page* (2006), in which she wore little more than a riding crop. Badge or whip, we're still likely to do whatever she says, watch her show lay off the pigeonholing, and laugh at her jokes. So far, we're one for three and willing to suffer the consequences.

—ANYA YURCHYSHYN

* *Esquire cannot guarantee that this joke will be funny to everyone.*

TOPICS FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION

>> The fine line between murder and assassination >> The possibility that architects are now just screwing around >> Fishnet: its aesthetic value, its cultural importance, its usefulness in catching fish >> Gretchen Mol, generally

ART DIR PAUL MARCIANO PH. YU TSAI

GUESS

BY MARCIANO



(A Thousand Words About Our Culture, by Stephen Marche)

WHAT'S WITH ALL THE UGLY PEOPLE HAVING SEX?

Anyone who's spent any appreciable amount of alone time in front of a computer lately knows that the culture of instant accreditation, in which a million blog posts are added to the Internet each day and everybody is a mouse click away from becoming somebody, has infiltrated the world of smut. Just as so many aspiring Spielbergs suey on YouTube and would-be Basquiats splay cyber galleries, Americans are no longer conducting business of porn to the professionals. Ever of ugly people are setting up poor-quality themselves in unimaginative positions for mankind, with Kevin Smith taking his latest, "Zack and Miri Make a Porno." The title more or less sums up the plot, but Smith's aspirations are higher: He's trying to make an "Uncle Buck" for 2008--a middle-of-the-road comedy that defines the figure of the crass-but-ultimately-decent schlub for a generation. While Uncle Buck drove a Mercury Marquis and hit golf balls at teenagers, Zack produces and stars in his own adult films. That's what regular guys do now--even as porn increasingly loses its share of Internet traffic, DIY porn sites like YouPorn and RedTube have shown an annual percentage increase in the thousands. The desire to videotape and share every last detail of ourselves has spread to our sex lives. Pornography, like every other type of expression available in contemporary life, has been democratized.







This is new. The production of porn has historically been an elite activity, and the tradition of the obscene has always thrived in the highest realms of high art. The walls of the best-preserved cities of the ancient world radiate with high-grade pornography--like the man weighing his enormous cock in a huge balance at Pompeii--which was crafted by a select few, utilizing the finest techniques transmitted by a literally priestly caste. Postmodernist art, too, has flirted constantly with the pornographic, in pieces like Warhol's "Blow Job" or the sculptures and images of Jeff Koons's "Made in Heaven" series, which show Koons and his Italian porn-star ex-wife, La Cicciolina, engaging in poses that are both an homage to and a mockery of the history of art-making: explicit references to Michelangelo's "The Creation of Adam," Manet's "Déjeuner," and Courbet's "The Origin of the World," among others.





But pornography isn't a close relative of high art anymore; it's now mass culture, a mainstream business that Smith's Zack likens to "Coke or Pepsi, with dicks in it." Days after John McCain picked Sarah

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(From left to right) CARLOS MIELE's whimsically layered ready-to-wear collection; FAMEUENA couture-gown-inspired Dress Lamp; DUNCAN QUINN's menswear defines an edgy vision of luxury; LOUIS POULSEN's iconic 1958 Artichoke Lamp; TSUNAMI GLASSWORKS hand-blown tube vases bring art to daily functional objects; luxurious, Italian-crafted SAHEUA HOME Riga bed linens; fluid modular Yang sofa by LIGNE ROSET; GEORGE NAKASHIMA organic, one-of-a-kind furnishings; supple, soft rubber-skinned STUA Onda Stool; all-weather PAOLA LENTI aqua lounge inspired by flowing water









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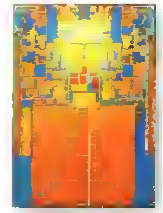
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Palin as his running mate, an Atlanta-based porn producer posted a casting call for look-alikes. Naturally. The porn Palin was as inevitable as the action figure, the lipstick-pit-bull foam cap, the Tina Fey impression, and the editorials in "The New York Times." Just another way of processing the event.

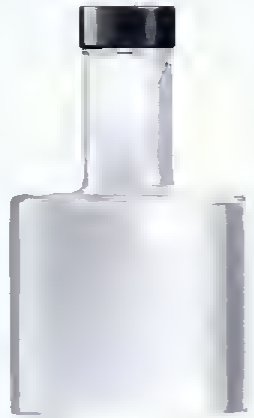
The explosion in DIY porn, like so many crazes and mass phenomena, has been sparked by celebrities—Tommy Lee and Pam, Colin Farrell, Paris Hilton, to name a choice few—and they remain our best hope for understanding our own worst impulses. All of their tapes were stolen, or taken under conditions of extreme betrayal, and their appeal, more than titillation, is that they offer a glimpse into the real lives of fantasy people. They show the airbrushed and preening at their most vulnerable and contorted, and the intimacy of our schadenfreude is the main attraction; it turns out that even someone as good-looking as Colin Farrell looks ridiculous taping himself in bed. The stars really are "just like us!" Kim Kardashian, meanwhile, changed the rules of DIY pornography almost before they came into existence. Her effort was the last homemade celebrity porn video with any capacity to surprise us, and she kept addressing "everyone" throughout the production, as in "For everyone who thinks my boobs are fake, they're real." The game was up right then. Surely, the trick is to maintain the fiction that this is somehow a private moment. "Ars est celare artem"—the art is to hide the art. Kardashian too clearly knew what she was doing. "Everyone," as it turns out, was the massive audience who would later tune in to "Keeping Up with the Kardashians." The sex tape wasn't the price she paid for being famous—it was how she achieved fame in the first place. Homemade pornography is the Kardashian arrangement extended to the vast and numinous world of our personal lives: Homemade pornography is do-it-yourself celebrity, and in a world in which just about anybody can get a reality show, the homemade sex tape is the closest most civilians can come to feeling like a real star. Taping oneself and posting the footage online offers the same deal as Hollywood: For the price of your body and your dignity, you get the joy of being an image others cannot tear their eyes from, the lightness and glory of intimacy's form without the burden of its content. This arrangement has seemed entirely equitable to millions of young Americans who've been promised their 15 minutes. And who would deny the world's youth the chance to exhaust their capacity for illusion by betraying themselves?



And so when rumors of a Britney Spears sex tape started to swirl, the news was greeted with perfunctory reporting and a collective yawn—in the world of amateur sex tapes, we're all superstars now. In the epilogue of "Zack and Miri Make a Porno," the two lovers start a company in which professionals help you make your own porn, a neat attempt to reconcile the professionals with the amateurs. But it's a failed attempt, a bad joke. Who wants to look like a porn star, which is, in the end, a gruesome example of a menial laborer? No, we want to be the celebrities, the people who are so wonderful at looking like they don't want to be looked at. In America today, the shadowy game of personal exposure is better than sex; the desire to have our dirty little secrets revealed is so much deeper and stronger than lust.



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The Instructions 2



The ESQUIRE CHILI COOK-OFF

I USED TO BE RELIGIOUS about chili. I had a favorite recipe, yellowed with age and stained with red. I had a dedicated pot. I had rules about no beans, and which meats, and how many of what kind of peppers—and any violation of those rules rendered the offending chili something less than "real" chili. No matter how delicious.

I blame most of this fundamentalist claptrap on the fact that I lived in Austin for a couple years in the late 1970s. I don't remember anything about Austin clearly, but I know that I moved there knowing and caring nothing about chili—or chicken-fried steak, or the flame-haired she-devils from bayou country who'd rip your back bloody in return for a vaginal orgasm—and I know that I left sure that I knew all there was to know about chili and much else.

Believing that you own the whole truth is the fundamental ignorance of fundamen-

talism food and otherwise but I did have a pretty good grasp of one kind of chili, and I ladled a lot of hot, sloppy bowls to a lot of folks over the years I'd take all night to make a pot, getting drunker and higher as the hours went by and the chili boiled down. It was the only dish I had—I'm no kind of cook—and making it felt like an event of considerable devotion and significant magnitude.

What a crock of shit I mean, mine was fine chili, no doubt, and I've done dumber things drunk than fix it But chili is a manifold god of joy worshipped in a boundless sanctuary of simmering delight and acid reflux And I learn this fresh once a week—usually on Saturday—when the wife puts a pound or so of coarse-ground turkey in a big saute pan, adds some tomato sauce to it, stirs a packet of Nueva Cocina chipotle taco seasoning into the mix, and—20 minutes later—serves up a mess that makes my neck sweat and my bowels shudder Great stuff

But is it *chili*? You bet It's all chili, brother, right down to the tablespoon scraping the last lines off the bottom of the big blue bowl

Point is, take salvation as it comes, even in the guise of heresy It's *all* chili It's all good

—SCOTT RAAB

THE COMPETITION

Esquire invited three of America's best young chefs to devise chili recipes exclusively for us, with no restrictions We prepared each one in the Esquire kitchen (actually, our apartments) and enlisted a master to be the judge The contest starts now

Contestant #1
Chef: KEVIN DAVIS
Restaurant: STEELHEAD DINER, SEATTLE

SLOW-BRAISED PORK-SHANK CHILI

Recipes as told to Francine Maroukian



The chili: A New Orleans native son Davis makes chili with all the complexity of the legendary Creole one-dish meals.

Ingredients

5 lbs pork shanks cut osso buco style (approximately 6 2 inch pieces)
kosher salt
*spice mix chili blend**
½ cup canola and olive oil blend
4 cloves garlic thinly sliced
2 medium onions, peeled and sliced
3 serrano chiles, thinly sliced
2 bay leaves
1 bottle stout
2 14 oz cans diced organic tomatoes (with juice)
4 qts organic beef stock
Dried bean mix:
1 cup each red beans pinto beans black beans posole (dried hominy)

Tabasco
1 small bunch cilantro, chopped
1 bunch green onions, sliced
Garnish:
diced tomato
diced red onion
sliced green onion
shredded pepper jack cheese

Method

Generously season pork shanks with kosher salt and a handful of the spice mix. Reserve remainder In a very large pasta pot, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add shanks and brown all over about four minutes per side. Remove from pan and reserve. Add garlic to cooking pot and sauté until just golden about two minutes. Add onions and chiles and cook, stirring constantly until tender about four minutes. Add bay leaves and remaining spice mix stirring constantly to toast spices, about three minutes. Add stout, tomatoes, and beef stock and stir. Return pork shanks to pot add dried bean mix, and bring to boil. Reduce heat to low cover and simmer stirring occasionally until shanks are very tender, about three hours. Remove shanks from pot and cool. Add Tabasco and salt to taste—typically about 2 ½ tbsp each—to the chili. Keep simmering for a thicker chili otherwise, reserve and keep warm. When shanks are cool enough to handle, remove bone, excess fat, and sinew and return meat to hot chili. Stir in cilantro and green onions. Bring to boil and adjust taste, adding more salt and Tabasco if needed. Add garnish. Serves 8 to 10

***Spice mix.**
1 tsp ground black pepper 1 tsp ground white pepper 1 tsp cayenne, 4 tbsp New Mexico chili powder mixed with 2 tbsp each ancho chile powder, ground cumin, chipotle chili powder



HOW TO MAKE REAL TEXAS CHILI

Debbie Ashmon, winner of the Terlingua International Chili Championship, has a 22-pound jalapeño statue that proves her chili is the world's best

ESQ: My chili is greasy. What am I doing wrong?
DA: You do need grease in your chili, but you need to get a lot of it off. After I gray the meat, I put it in a colander and pour water over it to drain, to get some grease off of it. I use the 80/20 beef—80 percent lean, 20 percent fat.
ESQ: Can you overcook chili?
DA: Yeah, the meat gets mushy. And it'll burn.
ESQ: Any other advice?
DA: Don't take the lid off too often—you lose a lot of flavor.
ESQ: What about stirring?
DA: You put your different dumps in, and then every once in a while, stir it to make sure it's not getting too thick.
ESQ: Dumps?
DA: Different blends of chili powders and spices. I have three dumps that I add at different times.
ESQ: Why not just put it all in at once?
DA: Things like cumin you can't get too hot, so you want to add that at the end.
ESQ: How spicy is your chili?
DA: From zero to five. mine's probably a four. But you can add a drop or two of lime juice to tone it down.
ESQ: Texas chili doesn't have beans in it, right?
DA: Right.
ESQ: What about macaroni?
DA: Oh no. You can't do that. They call that a "foreign object."
ESQ: What should you drink with chili?
DA: Well, beer usually. *Ashman's award-winning recipe can be found at esquire.com/texas-chili-recipe*



Contestant #2
Chef AKHTAR NAWAB
Restaurant GLOTTANIA, NEW YORK

WILD-BOAR CHILI WITH GARAM MASALA

The chili: Nawab's parents are from India, where they know from spices, and he was born and raised in Kentucky, where they know from giant wild pigs.

Ingredients
4 tbsp olive oil
Meat mix:
3 lbs wild boar leg, ground
1 lb pork shoulder, ground twice
1 thick slab bacon, minced
coarse salt and ground black pepper
Vegetable mix:
1 large onion, minced
4 cloves garlic, minced
1 jalapeño, deseeded and minced
kosher salt and ground black pepper

2 tbsp tomato paste
2 qts sweet cherry tomatoes (about 3 cups), cut in half
*4 tbsp garam masala spice mix**
2 cups chicken stock
2 15-oz cans red kidney beans, rinsed and drained
Garnish: cilantro

Method
In a large heavy pot over moderately high heat, heat olive oil until nearly smoking. Add meat mix and cook until deeply and evenly browned, about 15 minutes. Add vegetable mix, reduce heat, and cook until soft, six to eight minutes. Add tomato paste and cook about five minutes, stirring frequently. Add tomatoes, cover, and cook about 20 minutes. Stir in the 4 tbsp spice mix, add stock, and simmer until well combined, about five minutes. Stir in beans and cook until slightly thickened, 30 minutes more. Add garnish. Serves 8 to 10.

***Spice mix:**
1 3-inch stick cinnamon
½ tsp whole cloves
½ tsp grated nutmeg
2 tbsp each cumin seeds, coriander seeds, cardamom pods, whole black peppercorns, red chile flakes

In small heavy skillet over medium heat, dry toast spices until slightly browned and very aromatic. Transfer to plate and cool. Grind in a coffee or spice grinder or blender.

SIX GREAT BOWLS OF CHILI

The Chili Mac at Arapahoe Basin Ski Area, Colorado: Your basic blend of beans, beef, tomato, and cumin, but the mac and cheese pushes it over the edge. Not on the menu—just ask for chili mac. **Maple Sugar Chili at Skinny Pancake, Vermont:** Maple sweetens the best chili you can order by mail ($19 for 1.75 lbs, dakinfarm.com). **Cincinnati-style Chili at Skyline, Cleveland:** Chili Spaghetti Cheese. **The Gunslinger at Chili My Soul, Los Angeles:** Simmered for 30 hours. Ask for extra bacon. **Bowl of Red at Texas Chili Parlor, Austin:** Served X to XXX spicy. If you like an after burn better than a week of heartburn, play the middle. **Wendy's:** Nice and meaty and miraculously consistent. Use it as a dip for the fries.

Squadrons overhead?
They just want to have a look.



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Contestant #3
Chef:
DAVID BULL
Restaurant:
BOLLA, DALLAS

WHITE-BEAN-AND-ITALIAN-SAUSAGE CHILI



The chili: In concocting probably the only chili in Texas that doesn't include beef, Bull, a onetime James Beard Award nominee and *Iron Chef America* contender, shows the influence of his Italian ancestors.

Ingredients

1 tbsp vegetable oil
1 lb hot Italian fennel sausage links
1 tbsp olive oil
5 oz pancetta, diced
1 large yellow onion, diced
6 garlic cloves, minced
1 green bell pepper, diced
2 cups dry cannellini beans, rinsed

Spice mix:

1 tbsp finely chopped oregano leaves
2 tsp red pepper flakes
2 qts (8 cups) chicken stock
coarse salt and ground black pepper to taste

Garnish

sour cream
½ cup green onions, cut into long strips
*½ cup fried leeks**

Method

Film a large stock pot with vegetable oil and place over moderately high heat. Brown sausage on all sides. Reduce heat to low and cook through, eight to ten minutes. Remove sausage from pan and cool. Discard grease in the same pan, add olive oil and pancetta. Render pancetta over low heat until crisp, about seven to nine minutes. Add onion and cook until soft and translucent, five to six minutes. Add garlic and sauté until golden, about three minutes. Add remaining ingredients. Increase heat and bring to a boil. Dice reserved sausage and return to chili mixture. Lower heat and simmer until beans are tender, at least 90 minutes, stirring occasionally. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Serve each bowl of chili with a dollop of sour cream and some green onions and fried leeks. Serves 4 to 6.

***Fried leeks:**

2 leeks (white parts only), cleaned, trimmed, and cut into fine threads
1 cup canola oil
coarse salt to taste

Bring water to boil and blanch leek threads for five to eight seconds. Strain and squeeze excess moisture from leeks, patting dry with paper towels. In a large skillet, heat canola oil over high heat until almost smoking. Add leeks and fry until they just start to turn golden brown. Drain on paper towels. Season with salt.

THE VERDICT

As rendered by Daniel Boulud, world-famous chef, Frenchman

"I love chili. Are you kidding?" That was Bonino's response when we asked if he's qualified to judge chili. His authority: It turns out, extends beyond high cuisine and into good, dirty American chili. "We should give them all a prize," he said of our contestants. Indeed, but:



THE WINNER. White-bean-and-Italian-sausage chili: "*Mmm.* Excellent herbal flavor, and a good balance of meat and vegetables. *Mmm.* It's Italian Italy in a classic chili—a true interpretation. Soul satisfying. This is chili you want to keep going back to."

RUNNERS UP:

Wild boar chili with garam masala: "Here you have the charm of a lot of spice—much more exotic. I can see the spices have been well toasted, and the spicing is creative. This is a pretty cool way to use wild boar, which is like a cross between pork, beef, and venison."

Slow-braised pork-shank chili: "I like the heat—it's long and progressive. In a chili, you want the heat to stay. Chili is good to pull out of the freezer when friends crash, and this is great for that."



proprietors Barbara Hanke and Jess Jackson, Hawkeye Mountain Estate

KENDALL-JACKSON

Risk taking is a family trait. It's something our family is known for. Taking risks takes courage. Creating higher standards means you must allow failure. The fact is, only family-owned wineries can operate this way.

When my wife, Barbara, my family and I made the decision to use only Jackson Estates Grown grapes, it meant committing to fruit grown exclusively in vineyards that use our precision farming practices. A tremendous amount of risk and serious financial implications were associated with this decision.

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Being family-owned means we can be more involved. It also allows us to take the long view with how we work with the earth and how we make our wine. And we believe you can taste the difference. I have heard that many of you enjoy the taste of our wines but you aren't sure why. My goal is to help with **A Taste of the Truth**.

Jess S. Jackson

kj.com/truth

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Drinking SERIOUS RUMS

By David Wondrich

When we think of rum—if we think of rum—we generally think of little umbrellas and Coke and a whole lot of *woo-hoo!* (exclamation point included). Rum has become a fundamentally unserious beverage. And that's too bad, because rum is simply cane sugar distilled—just like Scotch is distilled barley sugar and cognac is distilled grape sugar. There's no reason it can't make just as smooth and complex a spirit as either of those. But a few things need to be taken care of first. For one thing, most rum actually starts not as sugar itself but as molasses, which takes some careful distilling or you'll end up with a pretty funky-tasting spirit. That funk isn't necessarily a bad thing—it sure wakes up a mai tai—but a little goes a long way when it's naked in a glass. Then there's the barrel problem. Spirits interact with oak more violently under a Caribbean sun than they do in, say, Scotland, which means that there's a good chance they'll get bitter before they get mellowed by age. Finally, why bother to make an exacting cut in your distillation run, keeping only the best stuff, if you know it's all going to end up drowned in Coke? The upshot is that few rums aspire to greatness, and fewer still reach it. Those that do, however, are pure liquid sunshine, like a tanning bed for your winter-chilled innards. Here three of our favorite sipping rums.

CLÉMENT CUVÉE HOMÈRE *($90)*

Distilled in Martinique from raw sugarcane juice (thus avoiding the molasses issue entirely), this lovely old rum uses French oak barrels to add spice and mellowness to the bright grassiness of the cane.

ANGOSTURA 1824 *($55)*

This 12-year old rum is made in Trinidad by the people responsible for Angostura bitters. It's also one of our favorite distillates on earth: a wildly spicy (yet *smoooooth*) rum with whiffs of vanilla, grilled pineapple, and brown sugar.

ENGLISH HARBOUR 10-YEAR-OLD RESERVE *($199)*

The least complex of the three, this product of Antigua is all vanilla cream when you nose it, but when you taste it, there are enough minerals and spice to keep it well on this side of insipid.





THE ANGRY GERMAN

On Drinking Among the Americans

(Note: This article is best read aloud in a German accent.)

MY DEAR AMERICANS,

You will be happy to hear that the Angry German has applied for U.S. citizenship. It will take a few months to go through, which gives me time to launch my campaign to address America's drinking problems, because there is no way I'm going to be "naturalized" into someone who drinks beer out of bottles (draft beer being of course the only proper kind) or starts flashing gang signs after three Bud Lights. Or someone who feels guilt and shame about drinking. God forbid you tip back a beer in a public park—come on, it's a beer. It's meant to be drunk outside in the sun.

Another phenomenon here in the U.S. is the invasion of girlie shots. I see six-foot-six, 280-pound men drinking pink shots and being proud of themselves. A shot must be drunk in one go. (Real shots should give you bodily pain if you drink them slowly.) Also, a shot must not have a second word in the name. Tequila is a shot, "tequila slammer" is a porn-star name.

America is a great country—you can do better. It's time you started treating beer with the respect it deserves. I call for a national beer association, the "NBA." You see, it worked for guns—they have a good lobby in the NRA, and I would make the argument that beer has caused less trouble than weapons. Let us create this "NBA." I nominate David Hasselhoff as initial chairman.

The author is a German who has been living in the U.S. for about ten years. He is often angry.



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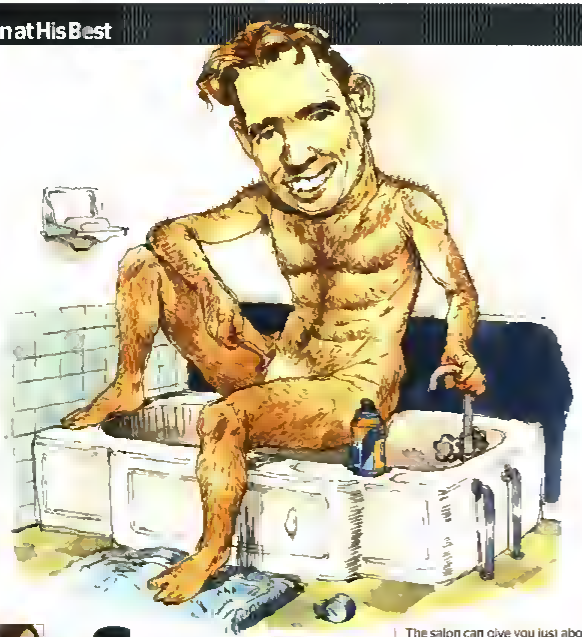
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>Sex

By Stacey Grenrock Woods

It seems like a lot of guys in pornos are going completely bare. Please don't tell me this is getting popular.

All right, but don't blame me when you're the laughingstock of the town orgy. Have you stopped to consider, hippie, that there might be reasons—wise, conventional reasons—for this practice you're so quick to dismiss? "The conventional wisdom certainly is that it enhances the size on camera," says *Adult Video News* magazine editor Dan Miller. And let's not overlook one's dedication to one's art. Stat. Evan Stone ("I wax all the way up to my belly button") explains that the porn actor's job "is to present the girls in a way that they look the most beautiful they can to be captured by whatever it is to be captured by." Well put, bro.

But it sounds like you fear most for your own crotch and are worried the New Pubis will be tickling down to the "real," or nonporn (I'm told there's still a difference) world sometime soon. The wax is certainly trickling down the thighs of João Padilha, general manager of New York's J. Sisters salon. "I can't live without it," he says of the salon's popular sunga wax, the male version of a Brazilian. Don't worry. If you're not man enough to take it all off, the salon can give you just about anything you dream up when you dream your pubic-hair dreams. "We do triangles, we do hearts, we do the strips, we do initials," says Padilha, suggesting that "every month you can get a different shape, a different design." So you see? There's always something to look forward to. But perhaps you should start with something simple, like a single tear.

[redacted] Sadly, I cannot, having been banned from all the online-dating sites, pending federal appeal. However, I did pass your URL around at the weekly meeting of the Attractive Women's Council (United in Enmity since 1968) and guess what? They already knew you'll. It was decided, after everyone stopped laughing long enough to vote, that you come off like a bit of a dick. (For your records, the final figure was 86–2. Cheryl Ladd thought you looked okay, and Bo Derek just felt bad for you.) The gals thought you seemed conceited—listing all your fancy accomplishments (community organizer? never heard of it) and imposing what Nicholas Boothman, author of *How to Make Someone Fall in Love with You in 90 Minutes or Less*, who was also there, called a "fairly tyrannical set of demands" on your dates. But what really got them was that you showed no humility. "There was no weakness, no Achilles' heel," nothing quipped Boothman, haughtily. Women like to see a weak spot so we know just where to strike. The Council ultimately ruled that you amend your profile to include something you're ashamed of, and if you haven't got anything, you can always use this.

[redacted] Poor guy. What is he, a leper? Studies show that about 16 percent of American men have attended a prostitute, but that number varies dramatically the closer you get to Nevada. "Most men in America, if they will be honest, will tell you that they have paid for sex," says Moonlite Bunnyranch owner Dennis Hof, who estimates that about two million men have purchased sex from his whorehouse. When you average those figures against the 99 percent of your friends and take into account that so many men either incorrectly complete or decline to fill out the post-sex survey altogether, the number is nearly impossible to gauge. But as they say, there's always room for improvement. So gentlemen, it's time to take action. Hookers aren't going to just come to you!

Got a sex question of your own? Send it to us via esquire.com/talk.

MINOR CATASTROPHE NO. 72:

YOU'RE FALLING ASLEEP IN A MEETING

Consultant: Rafael Pelayo, M.D., Stanford Sleep Disorders Clinic



(1) *Chewgum. Even a simple activity can be enough to keep you engaged, as long as it doesn't involve bubbles.*



(2) *Sit as close to the front as you can, and make eye contact. Shame can be a powerful stimulant.*



(3) *To keep your brain active, think about how you'd make the presentation better. Or focus on something interesting in the room, like the crushing weight of expectation.*

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>Answer Fella

EAR HAIR, EXHAUSTION, FLIGHTS OF EMOTION & AGING

ESQUIRE'S ANSWER FELLA believes that there are no stupid questions. Just stupid people who don't ask questions, fearing they'll look stupid. So ask Answer Fella anything. If he doesn't know the answer, he'll find out who does or who has a guess that sounds right.

All I've gotten older—I'm 37—I've begun to trim the hair in my nose and on my ears. I took at my father, and he has a small forest growing out of both his ears and nose. Why is it that as a man ages, his ear and nose hairs grow more?

Theories of causation abound as unproved theories tend to do—age-related changes in hormonal levels of testosterone or estrogen or both; genetics; flagrant onanism; bad mojo—but the experts concur on this: Staring at the old bastard's shrubbery is a very bad idea unless he's asleep.

In fact, Pops is a likely culprit. Dr. Edward Schneider, professor of gerontology at the University of Southern California, tells Answer Fella, "Just like there is a genetic component to hair loss and to the graying of hair, there appears to be some genetic basis for this growth of ear hair, too." Beyond that, all is darkness until by science. "There's really no one," Dr. Schneider says, "who has spent his life dedicated to nasal hair or ear hair."

Dr. Sherwin Parikh of New York City's Tribeca Skin Center does mention dihydrotestosterone (DHT)—which is what testosterone enzymatically converts to as men age and what causes male-pattern baldness—as a *possible* factor.

"It's theory," says Dr. Parikh. "It's scientific theory that has yet to be investigated with any vigor. But it probably has a lot more to do with [your] father and grandfather than the hormones."

Every now and then you hear about some celebrity suffering from "exhaustion" and getting hospitalized. But I've never heard about a noncelebrity suffering from clinical "exhaustion." Is it for real?

Lord, yes—every bit as real as Cher's breasts. Or, as Dr. Barron Lerner, author of *When Illness Goes Public: Celebrity Patients and How We Look at Medicine*, puts it, "Usually it's a euphemism for people who have run down their bodies because of choices they've made. Or choices they haven't made. You know what I mean?"

You mean like choosing not to take vitamins?

"It might be something like depression or anxiety, or it could be substance related. If there's alcoholism or addiction, those could be the actual diagnoses, but the way it gets played out in the press might just be called exhaustion."

According to Howard Samuels, a therapist and director of the Wonderland Center in Los Angeles, "Exhaustion is just a stupid phrase when you're dealing with somebody who has to go to an institution. The terminology is pretty much a joke. When you're exhausted, you go to bed, you don't lock yourself in an institution. Everyone enters rehab exhausted from drinking too much, taking too many drugs, and hitting such a bottom that they can't function."

Dr. Lerner, by the way, traces the use of the "exhaustion" euphemism back to the 1920s, "when the obsession with celebrities began," which, coincidentally, makes it nearly as old as—you guessed it—Cher's breasts.

I travel for work—a lot. Whenever I'm in a plane, I cry at the drop of a hat, mostly during movies. And I'm not just talking about *The Remains of the Day*; I'm talking *Cloverfield*. So am I just more emotionally vulnerable than the guy sitting in 34B, or is there something about altitude, bad air, and lousy food that makes me weep?

First, thanks for helping to confirm AF's belief that absolutely no sentient adult sat through *Cloverfield* who wasn't strapped to a seat in a venue with every exit door locked.

Now then. Dr. Petra Illig, a former Delta Air Lines flight surgeon, sees no physiological basis for shedding those tears. Absent any underlying health issues, she says, "It sounds psychological. He may have a mild fear of flying. Or he may have other stress related to traveling—work schedules, not sleeping right. It probably has more to do with fatigue and psychology than it does with the airplane environment."

But Dr. Paul Appelbaum, a professor of psychiatry at Columbia University, notes that "in modern aircraft at high altitudes, the oxygen concentration of the air is lower... and that means our blood is somewhat less oxygen-rich than it ordinarily is. For some people, that can produce a kind of light-headedness and giddiness that may also contribute to a somewhat more labile emotional state."

Dr. Appelbaum also suggests that alcohol consumption—with or without a crappy movie—may play a role. "Booze," combined with anxiety and underlying giddiness due to the relative lack of oxygen in the blood, can have an even more potent effect."

What with all the brouhaha over China's Olympic women's gymnastics team, I was wondering, does a scientific means exist for testing a person's precise age? You know, like the way we can count a tree's rings?

"In terms of chronological age, no, we don't have anything like that in humans," says Felipe Sierra, director of the National Institutes of Health's division of aging biology. "You can guess a range, but with no certainty and no scientific validity. In terms of an exact age, you can't tell. There's nothing that you can cut off and count."

Unlike, of course—you guessed it—Cher's breasts.

Got a question? Send it to Answer Fella via esquire.com/talk



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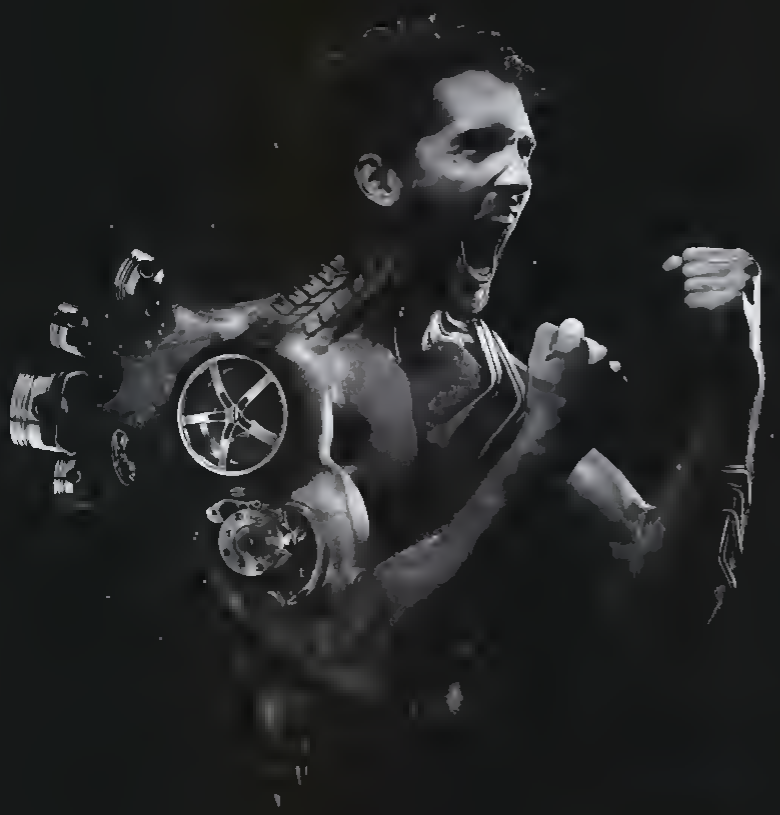
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The 7 Greatest

Five years ago, we named "Frank Sinatra Has a Cold," by Gay Talese, the greatest story Esquire ever published. Here, the other six.



SEPTEMBER 2003

In truth, however, the Falling Man fell with neither the precision of an arrow nor the grace of an Olympic diver. He fell like everyone else, like all the other jumpers—trying to hold on to the life he was leaving, which is to say he fell desperately, inelegantly. In Drew's famous photograph, his humanity is in accord with the lines of the buildings. In the rest of the sequence—the eleven outtakes—his humanity stands apart. He is not augmented by aesthetics. he is merely human, and his humanity, startled and in some cases horizontal, obliterates everything else in the frame.

Tom Junod, "The Falling Man"

NOVEMBER 1968



[illegible] Norman Mailer [illegible] Nixon [illegible] Kennedy [illegible] the [illegible] all factions upon [illegible] the [illegible] aristocracy of the American dream.

Norman Mailer on Nixon versus Kennedy, "Superman Comes to the Supermarket"



JUNE 2006

Kazbek Misikov stared at the bomb hanging above his family. It was a simple device, a plastic bucket packed with explosive paste, nails, and small metal balls. It weighed perhaps eight pounds. The existence of this bomb had become a central focus of his life. If it exploded, Kazbek knew, it would blast shrapnel into the heads of his wife and two sons, and into him as well, killing them all.

C. J. Chivers, "The School"

JUNE 1986

He's always first. 8:00 A.M. at the tennis club. He's been up for hours. he's ready. He fidgets awaiting appearance by some other any other man with a racket whereupon Ted bellows, before the newcomer can say hello, "WELL, YOU WANNA PLAY?" Ted's voice normally emanates with gale force even at close range. Apologists attribute this to the ear injury that sent him home from Korea and ended his combat flying career. But Ted can speak softly and hear himself fine, if it's only one friend around. The roar with which he speaks in a public place or to anyone else has nothing to do with his hearing. It's your hearing he's worried about.

Richard Ben Cramer, "What Do You Think of Ted Williams Now?"

MARCH 1965



Starting time! Linda Vaughn with the big blonde hair and blossomy breasts puts down her Coca-Cola and the potato chips and slips off her red stretch pants and her white blouse and walks out of the officials booth in her Rake-a-check red show girl's costume with her long honeydew legs in net stockings and climbs up on the red Firebird float. The Life Symbol of stock car racing! Yes!

Tom Wolfe, "The Last American Hero Is Junior Johnson. Yes!"

APRIL 1966

[illegible] was the victim of an ailment so [illegible] more than [illegible] people would [illegible] it trivial. But when it gets to Sinatra it can plunge [illegible] a state of [illegible] deep depression panic even rage.

Gay Talese, "Frank Sinatra Has a Cold"

OCTOBER 1966



"They hit a little girl," and in his muscular black arms the first specialist carried out a seven-year-old, long black hair and little earrings starting eyes—*eyes*: her eyes are what froze themselves onto M's memory, it seemed there was no white to those eyes, nothing but black ellipses like black goldfish. The child's nose was bleeding—there was a hole in the back of her skull.

John Sack, "M"



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ESQUIRE *INNOVATION*

THE CHANGE AGENT

Italo Zucchelli is the creative director of men's wear at Calvin Klein. He is also one of the most innovative minds in the fashion business. Here, on the occasion of his brand's 40th anniversary, he talks.

ESQUIRE: *Since this whole style section is about innovation, and you've made that your watchword with your designs at Calvin Klein, want to take a stab at defining it for us?*

ITALO ZUCCHELLI: It means looking for new ways of expressing things—in my case, men's fashion—and one of the ways I do that is by creating familiar kinds of clothes out of unfamiliar fabrics. The fabric makes it new, makes it interesting.

ESQ: *But a lot of us hear words like* interesting *and want to run the other way.*

➔

THE FIRST FORTY

A brief history of Calvin Klein

Founded in 1968, grows in early '70s.



Calvin Klein's celebrity grows, too, 1976.



Teams up with Brooke Shields, 1981



Launches men's underwear, 1982



Calvin Klein Underwear

PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID E. ACK

ESQUIRE INNOVATION

IZ I know, but if people would try to be a little bit more open to it, they would find themselves enjoying a different spin on a very familiar piece of clothing. Let me give you an example. A couple of seasons ago, I did a suit jacket made from technical fabric. It felt good, it looked great, and it didn't crease at all when you sat or moved around.

ESQ: *And that made it easier to wear.*

IZ Exactly. Look, I want to design clothes that are interesting, but I want people to wear them. I've found fabrics that were fantastic but were totally unrealistic. Too heavy or stiff. Nobody wants to wear that.

ESQ: *With the Calvin Klein brand turning 40 this year, you've got a lot of history in your rearview. How do you square that with your ideas about innovation?*

IZ I worked under Calvin for years before I took over [men's wear], and I've breathed the air long enough to know what this brand is about. And what's great is that my interest in technology matches the modernity that's always defined Calvin Klein as a brand.

ESQ: *So why don't more designers use technical materials like you?*

IZ. This is a question that I'm always asked, and it's true. There aren't a lot of us.

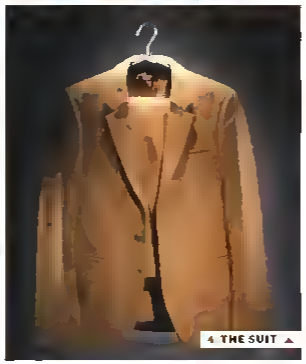
ESQ: *But why?*

IZ: I don't know, but I like it.


1 THE TRENCH COAT


2 THE TUXEDO


3 THE BOMBER JACKET


4 THE SUIT

THE NEXT FORTY

Zucchelli looks to the future with new takes on classics

1 **"This fabric** changes color depending on body heat. When it's very cold, it's black; when it gets warmer, it turns green." *Thermocolor trench coat ($1,550)* 2 **"This shows** how you can take something as familiar as a tuxedo and make it new with a nylon webbing lapel." *Wool-and-nylon canvas tuxedo ($2,825)* 3 **"We took** the same kind of nylon as that tuxedo lapel and used it to remake the jacket. It looks kind of like a seat belt, but it's one of the most expensive items from that collection." *Nylon webbed jacket ($2,975)* 4 **"I wanted** a new fit for a Calvin Klein staple—a camel suit—so the pants are a little tighter, the jacket is a little shorter, and the result looks totally different." *Camel hair suit ($2,050) Hangers ($63 for a set of six) by Glaro, futurekits.com*



Introduces Mark to Kate, 1992

Helps define '90s minimalism, 1994.


Vaya, 1995.


Zucchelli takes over men's wear, 2003.


Which just about brings us up to speed, 2007.



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Models shown: 2009 GL 320 BlueTEC, GL 320 BlueTEC and 2009 ML320 BlueTEC. 2009 GL320 BlueTEC and 2009 R320 BlueTEC above shown in optional metallic paint. 2009 ML320 BlueTEC below in standard paint. Additional optional equipment may be featured. *Road & Track* 10/08. **Motor Trend* 10/08. ©2008 Mercedes-Benz USA, LLC.

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ESQUIRE INNOVATION

AQUASCUTUM U.S.A.

How a 157-year-old British brand is remaking itself in 2008

STEP 1:

NEW DESIGNER

The company recruited Savile Row renegade Nick Hart to design a line of men's suits, and Hart's off-kilter take on traditional tailoring calls to mind the edgy sartorial style of '60s-era London (See: Michael Caine circa *Get Carter*)

Wool-and-cashmere suit ($1030) cotton shirt ($170) and silk tie ($140).

STEP 2:

NEW PRODUCT

To reach younger customers who can't shell out $1,400 for its classic trench, Aquascutum introduced the AquaMac, a lower priced polyester trench coat that folds up into its built-in pouch. It weighs almost nothing and takes up little room in your bag.

Nylon AquaMac trench coat ($580).

STEP 3:

NEW CUSTOMERS

Both the AquaMac and Hart's line recently arrived at Bloomingdale's in the U.S., marking the first time the two product lines have been available in America.





THE APPRECIATION

The Packable Zegna Coat

It seems like a solution in search of a problem. Whose raincoat is such an unholy burden that they need to fold it up and zip it into a little package? But the fact is that most unworn raincoats *are* kind of a pain in the ass, especially when you're on the go and personal space is at a premium. That's why, over the past few years, brands like Aquascutum (left) and Zegna (above) have started making packable raincoats—all the better to stay dry while traveling light. *Globetrotter jacket ($695) by Zegna Sport*

PAIRING OF THE MONTH ■ Rayon and milk protein



The good people of Japan always seem to get the best technology before the rest of us, and for a time they were the sole beneficiaries of Uniqlo's Heat Tech series. These T-shirts and polos are made from a mixture of rayon and milk protein (close-up, left) that traps body moisture and uses it to retain heat. The company estimates that one in three Japanese residents now owns a Heat Tech garment, and with its debut in U.S. stores last year, Americans can now feel the milky heat themselves. *Uniqlo.com*





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ESQUIRE INNOVATION

A NEW KIND OF WARM

And four ways that help you get it when



IT'S SNOWING

Moncler waterproofed classic English wool flannel and then stuffed it with the company's famous goose down. Layer it with wool and cotton. *Down-filled wool jacket ($1,700) by Moncler; zip-front lamb's-wool sweater ($65) and cotton shirt ($70) by J.Crew; silk tie ($75) by Polo by Ralph Lauren.*

THE HIDDEN DETAIL: The fine Teflon coating that waterproofs the woolen exterior.



THE HIDDEN DETAIL: Welded body seams for a watertight seal.

IT'S RAINING

Made from the brand's patented "Typhoon 20000" fabric, this Paul & Shark jacket has proven impermeable to the pressure of 20,000 millimeters of water. Or a ton of rain. *Polyester jacket ($1,405) by Paul & Shark; polyester fleece jacket ($60) by Eddie Bauer; cotton henley ($50) by DKNY.*



THE HIDDEN DETAIL: The 700-fill goose down inside the vest, imported from northern Europe and some of the warmest stuff on earth.

IT'S SUNNY AND THE WOOD NEEDS CHOPPING

A down-filled vest will warm your torso while this shell, made from Japanese water-repellent twill and equipped with special shape memory that molds to your frame, frees up your arms. *Nylon premium goose-down-filled vest ($99) by Eddie Bauer; lightweight shape-memory jacket ($375) by Victorinox Swiss Army; cashmere turtleneck sweater ($425); Polo by Ralph Lauren.*



IT'S DARK

No ski jackets after 6:00 P.M., so try this wool overcoat that retains heat with thin silk and nylon inner layers. *Wool double coat with inner vest ($1,675) by Fay; cashmere-and-wool sport coat ($2,375) by Michael Bastian; shirt ($195) and tie ($115) by Hickey; gloves ($95) by Boss Black.*

THE HIDDEN DETAIL: A thin nylon hood hidden in the collar for extra protection from snow.

ON CARING FOR EXTREMITIES ■ A few guidelines for protection from the toes on up



One good pair of wool socks is better than two layered cotton ones. Wool socks ($21 for set of two) by L.L. Bean.



Snowball fights are for kids. Unless the other guy starts it and your gloves are waterproof. Fleece-and-nylon gloves ($25) by North Face.



Big ol' scarves seem like a good idea at the time. Thin wool ones actually are. Wool scarf ($50) by Patagonia.



The softer the wool of your hat, the less likely it will screw up your hair. Cashmere hat ($250) by Lore Piana.

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Um, What Just Happened?

THE WORLD'S NOT COMING TO AN END, BUT WHEN WE EMERGE FROM THIS ECONOMIC HELLHOLE, WE'LL BE A DIFFERENT COUNTRY—ONE IN WHICH OUR ENTIRE FINANCIAL SYSTEM WILL LOOK ROUGHLY LIKE IT DID IN 1978. BY RICHARD MEDLEY

We can get complex about this if you want (no, thank you), but what happened to the global economy is disarmingly simple. Free money makes you stupid.

It was true in Japan during the 1980s, when bar drinks featuring ice from glaciers were going for $250 per. It was true in Mexico in the early nineties, when you could get kidnapped and still turn a profit. And it was true in the late nineties in the United States, when Internet companies were so prosperous, they destroyed the concept of wearing a suit and tie to work. You can see where that got us.

But the free-money-will-make-you-stupid doctrine became systemic to the global economy only after the dot-commers had hocked their last foosball table. The last six years have been a stunning collision of greed, technological advance, and free-market fundamentalism that produced an economic supercollider.

There's nothing new about greed—when Chuck Prince, who then headed Citigroup, said in 2007 "As long as the music is playing, you've got to get up and dance," he was just saying what every person who had any access to capital was thinking—but technology comes in waves, and it made *this* intersection of tech and the free market particularly toxic.

From time immemorial, we've had a financial system run mainly by men in their fifties and sixties that worked like this: Banks made money by loan

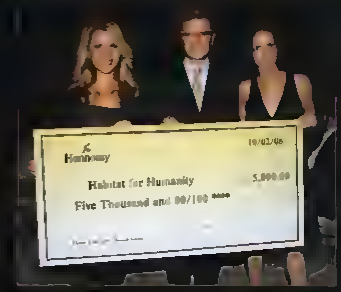
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FLAUNT YOUR TASTE THROUGH GIVING

In May 2008, Hennessy held the Flaunt Your Taste Through Giving contest asking you to nominate the charity you felt was most deserving of receiving a $5,000 donation from Hennessy. Thousands of you entered with compelling stories and testimonials, but in the end Ray Rusnak of Hidden Valley Lake, CA won the day for Habitat for Humanity.

Above and beyond Hennessy employees' volunteer work with the organization, Hennessy honored the great efforts of Habitat for Humanity and presented Habitat for Humanity Greater Los Angeles and Habitat for Humanity Boston with a check for $5,000 at a private event in Los Angeles at the Esquire House Hollywood Hills. It was a triumphant night for all who were there as Flaunting Your Taste Through Giving was celebrated.



Bernard Peiffon, President of Hennessy Cognac (center) presents Allison Trelevan, Vice President, Entertainment Industry Partnerships, Habitat for Humanity Greater Los Angeles (left) with a donation at the event celebrating Hennessy's Flaunt Your Taste Through Giving contest. Marcia Kline, Associate Publisher/Advertising at Esquire (right), was on hand to host the event and to celebrate Hennessy's worthy charitable effort.

ABOUT HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

Since its founding in 1976, Habitat for Humanity has built and rehabilitated nearly 300,000 houses with families in need across the U.S. and around the world, providing simple, decent and affordable shelter for more than 1.5 million people.

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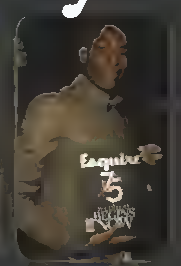
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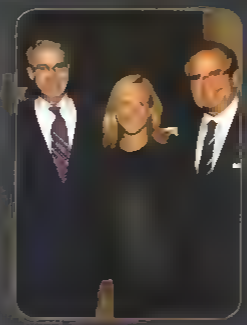
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THE ESQUIRE SUITE AT MANDARIN ORIENTAL, NEW YORK

On September 9, Esquire and Mandarin Oriental, New York hosted The Esquire Suite—an exclusive luxury event held in the hotel's Presidential Suite, a space that has never before been available as an event venue.

Hosted by Esquire VP & Publisher Kevin C. O'Malley and Esquire Fashion Director Nick Sullivan, the event featured informal presentations and product displays from top luxury brands: a.testoni, Bombardier Global, Luigi Borrelli, Piaget, Porsche Design and Vertu.

Over 50 VIPs enjoyed Italian wines from Vos Vinum and a selection of hors d'oeuvres prepared by Mandarin Oriental's award-winning culinary team, while experiencing first-hand the quality, craftsmanship, and impeccable details that compose the very best in luxury goods. Upon departure, guests were treated with a gift bag valued at over $500 featuring gifts from all participating brands.

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From top left: a.testoni Global CEO Elvira Farinelli, Esquire VP & Publisher Kevin C. O'Malley, a.testoni's Francesco Almi. Esquire Fashion Director Nick Sullivan; Esquire's Marcia Kilos, Vertu's Michelle Pedroza, Model wearing Luigi Borrelli. Second row: Mandarin Oriental's Edward Shepard and Tammy Peters, Esquire's Stephen Jacoby. Esquire's Louis Colelli. Luigi Borrelli's Angelo de Cavalo and Bernd Anicich; Piaget's Jim Kleiber and Larry Boland, Mandarin Oriental's Carrie DeMarte, Esquire's Kevin C. O'Malley. Third row: Elorina Group's Jonathan Zirlen, Amber Smithson and Danyelle Solland.

Photo Credit: Jason Orlevi

ing capital and making deals and taking the risk that they would not be paid back or that the deal would fall apart. That was simple enough. But then along came the math geeks who convinced many of us that instead of making loans and taking risk, we could make loans, "securitize" them, and then sell those securities to idiots in Europe and China.

When the old guys asked how that would work, they were shown sheets of paper with equations on them, and instead of saying, "I don't understand one damn thing on this page," they said, "So you're sure it'll work?"

That opened the door to an entirely new concept for banking: Let's make loans to deadbeats and sell them off in "tranches" to idiots in Europe who don't even know what a "tranche" is but like the idea that the S&P rates them highly and that they can make 6 percent a year on one *with no risk*. (Come here, little kitty.) As long as everyone looked the other way and stock prices kept rising, there was no pressure to do anything differently. Once the house of cards collapsed, all they were going to have to do was claim to have been blinded by science and point to the nerds who designed the strategy. (Which is exactly where Congress's investigation is heading.)

It's popular to blame Bush (it's actually just plain fun, but it's getting a little old) for the lack of regulation that allowed this circus to develop. But it wasn't Bush. The French did it, the Brits did it, the Russkies did it, too. And so on. Two-bedroom apartments in Mumbai were going for more than $3 million. Let me repeat: *Mumbai*.

The only people who didn't get sucked into this morass were the Japanese (who now, once again, have all the money in the world), but that's only because the bubble didn't last long enough to suck them in.

This was a global frenzy of financial-market freedom that we all participated in. Try to find someone outside of Al Qaeda who complained about the game we were playing.

The odd thing now is that people are trying to pretend everything's okay. It's like those idiots who stay on barrier islands when a hurricane hits. They get to the eye of the storm and say "cool," only to get swept away as the back side of the storm barrels through.

It will be a generation before we return to anything like the giddiness of the last ten years. The boomers, a generation averse to saving, are exiting the consumption equation, and that, along with the end of the fantasy that borrowing eighteen times your annual income is a good idea, means growth will slow to a crawl.

You want the perfect indicator of this? Illegal immigration has plummeted recently. That's a very sensitive leading indicator because—whatever you may think—illegal immigrants risk everything to come here, and if they're less willing to do it now, it's because they are hearing from the bottom level of our economic pyramid that things suck and are unlikely to get any better. Taking them out of the equation means less demand for housing, cars, and everything else.

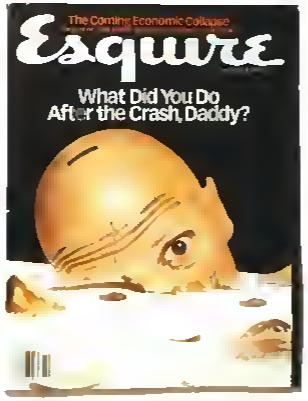
We are not going into a new Great Depression. Central banks, finance ministries, etc. have acted with remarkable speed to counter the financial crisis. As a result, the recession—which is just starting—is going to be just as long and painful as recessions normally are.

The fantasy of global free-market capitalism is over. Countries will revert to their historic behaviors: The U.S. will sell off its publicly held assets as soon as feasible (which may be a decade, but still). The Europeans will use it as a reason to go back to communalism, and the North Koreans will use it as a reason to test nuclear warheads over the Sea of Japan, no matter what they tell Condi Rice.

U.S. authorities are going to have a hell of a time balancing the absolute ocean of money they've created with the fact that slow growth is going to be with us for a while. This is how inflation happens.

Finally, we will re-create an entirely new banking system under the ruins of the current behemoths. Thousands of smaller banks will rise to fill the demand for loans, but they will be prudent and do silly things like demand you have an income and an ability to pay back the loan. People will have to live on their incomes, and that will slow growth but make us a sounder economy. These smaller banks will be rooted in communities they know. Ten years from now, the American financial sector will look like it did thirty years ago—all those little banks will do what banks used to do: lend money to people who both need it and can afford to pay it back. Imagine that. ■

Richard Medley is the chairman of Medley Capital and a former business partner of George Soros's. He teaches from time to time at Yale University.



Why I'm Happy

AMID THE RUBBLE OF THIS CRISIS ARE A FEW CHERISHED AXIOMS THAT DESERVED TO DIE

BY KEN KURSON

Here's how repulsed I've been by the inane decoupling of risk and reward in the financial markets over the past five years: I quit. I spent a decade clawing my way into prominence as a financial



Men with Erectile Dysfunction (ED) are discovering that VIAGRA can help them get and keep harder erections, which can lead to more satisfying sexual experiences. Ready to get the message? *Read all about it at viagra.com.* Then ask your doctor if VIAGRA is right for you.

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VIAGRA is prescribed to treat erectile dysfunction. We know that no medicine is for everyone. Don't take VIAGRA if you take nitrates, often prescribed for chest pain, as this may cause a sudden unsafe drop in blood pressure.

Talk with your doctor first. Make sure your heart is healthy enough to have sex. If you have chest pain, nausea, or other discomforts during sex, seek medical help right away. As with any ED tablet, in the rare event of an erection lasting more than four hours, seek immediate medical help to avoid long-term injury.

In rare instances, men taking PDE5 inhibitors (oral erectile dysfunction medicines, including VIAGRA) reported a sudden decrease or loss of vision, or sudden decrease or loss of hearing. It is not possible to determine whether these events are related directly to these medicines or to other factors. If you experience any of these symptoms, stop taking PDE5 inhibitors, including VIAGRA, and call a doctor right away.

The most common side effects of VIAGRA are headache, facial flushing, and upset stomach. Less common are bluish or blurred vision, or being sensitive to light. These may occur for a brief time. VIAGRA does not protect against sexually transmitted diseases including HIV.

Please see Important Facts for VIAGRA on the following page or visit viagra.com for full prescribing information.

For free information, including questions to ask your doctor, call 1-888-4VIAGRA (1-888-484-2472).

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.FDA.gov/medwatch or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

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IMPORTANT FACTS

VIAGRA *(sildenafil citrate) tablets* (vi-AG-rah)

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION ABOUT VIAGRA

Never take VIAGRA if you take any medicines with nitrates. This includes nitroglycerin. Your blood pressure could drop quickly. It could fall to an unsafe or life-threatening level.

ABOUT ERECTILE DYSFUNCTION (ED)

Erectile dysfunction means a man cannot get or keep an erection. Health problems, injury, or side effects of drugs may cause ED. The cause may not be known.

ABOUT VIAGRA

VIAGRA is used to treat ED in men. When you want to have sex, VIAGRA can help you get and keep an erection when you are sexually excited. You cannot get an erection just by taking the pill. Only your doctor can prescribe VIAGRA.

VIAGRA does not cure ED.

VIAGRA does not protect you or your partner from STDs (sexually transmitted diseases) or HIV. You will need to use a condom.

VIAGRA is not a hormone or an aphrodisiac.

WHO IS VIAGRA FOR?

Who should take VIAGRA?

Men who have ED and whose heart is healthy enough for sex.

Who should NOT take VIAGRA?

- If you ever take medicines with nitrates:
  - Medicines that treat chest pain (angina), such as nitroglycerin or isosorbide mononitrate or dinitrate
- If you use some street drugs, such as "poppers" (amyl nitrate or nitrite)
- If you are allergic to anything in the VIAGRA tablet.

BEFORE YOU START VIAGRA

Tell your doctor if you have or ever had:

- Heart attack, abnormal heartbeats, or stroke
- Heart problems, such as heart failure, chest pain, or aortic valve narrowing
- Low or high blood pressure
- Severe vision loss
- An eye condition called retinitis pigmentosa
- Kidney or liver problems
- Blood problems, such as sickle cell anemia or leukemia
- A deformed penis, Peyronie's disease, or an erection that lasted more than 4 hours
- Stomach ulcers or any kind of bleeding problems

Tell your doctor about all your medicines. Include over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal products. Tell your doctor if you take or use:

- Medicines called alpha-blockers to treat high blood pressure or prostate problems. Your blood pressure could suddenly get too low. You could get dizzy or faint. Your doctor may start you on a lower dose of VIAGRA.
- Medicines called protease inhibitors for HIV. Your doctor may prescribe a 25 mg dose. Your doctor may limit VIAGRA to 25 mg in a 48 hour period.
- Other methods to cause erections. These include pills, injections, implants, or pumps.

POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS OF VIAGRA

Side effects are mostly mild to moderate. They usually go away after a few hours. Some of these are more likely to happen with higher doses.

The most common side effects are:

- Headache
- Feeling flushed
- Upset stomach

Less common side effects are:

- Trouble telling blue and green apart or seeing a blue tinge on things
- Eyes being more sensitive to light
- Blurred vision

Rarely, a small number of men taking VIAGRA have reported these serious events:

- Having an erection that lasts more than 4 hours. If the erection is not treated right away, long-term loss of potency could occur.
- Sudden decrease or loss of sight in one or both eyes. We do not know if these events are caused by VIAGRA and medicines like it or caused by other factors. They may be caused by conditions like high blood pressure or diabetes. If you have sudden vision changes, stop using VIAGRA and all medicines like it. Call your doctor right away.
- Sudden decrease or loss of hearing. We do not know if these events are caused by VIAGRA and medicines like it or caused by other factors. If you have sudden hearing changes, stop using VIAGRA and all medicines like it. Call your doctor right away.
- Heart attack, stroke, irregular heartbeats, and death. We do not know whether these events are caused by VIAGRA or caused by other factors. Most of these happened in men who already had heart problems.

If you have any of these problems, stop VIAGRA. Call your doctor right away.

HOW TO TAKE VIAGRA

Do

- Take VIAGRA only the way your doctor tells you. VIAGRA comes in 25 mg, 50 mg, and 100 mg tablets. Your doctor will tell you how much to take.
- If you are over 65 or have serious liver or kidney problems, your doctor may start you at the lowest dose (25 mg).
- Take VIAGRA about 1 hour before you want to have sex. VIAGRA starts to work in about 30 minutes when you are sexually excited. VIAGRA lasts up to 4 hours.

Don't

- Do not take VIAGRA more than once a day.
- Do not take more VIAGRA than your doctor tells you. If you think you need more VIAGRA, talk with your doctor.
- Do not start or stop any other medicines before checking with your doctor.

NEED MORE INFORMATION?

- This is only a summary of important information. Ask your doctor or pharmacist for complete product information. OR
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LETTING THE DUST SETTLE OCCASIONALLY—WHICH GREENSPAN LACKED THE COURAGE TO DO—WILL SEPARATE THE VIABLE IDEAS AND REASONABLE EXPANSION PLANS FROM THE INTEREST-ONLY LOANS AND STARBUCKS

[redacted]

journalist and commentator—a television gig, books, a column in this magazine. And the reason I quit opining about finance for a living basically boils down to disgust. Mostly with Alan Greenspan's pathetic desire to preserve his own reputation by flooding the globe with cheap dollars, no matter what the long-term costs. But also with the market's willingness to accommodate those dollars, regardless of how obvious it became that such madness was unsustainable. When I wrote in Esquire's October 1998 cover story that this market was going to crash and stay crashed, I mocked the idea that "Greenspan at the wheel" guaranteed an ever-strengthening of the economy. I said "stock prices are ridiculous," but I had no idea that our Federal Reserve chairman and the presidents who employed him and the financial institutions that were fattened by his largesse were jointly capable of such delusion. We all have our favorite example: a friend with horrible credit who suddenly lives in a big house with a no-money-down, interest-only mortgage. Deadbeats defaulting on their mortgages so they can make their car payments. A homeowner besieged by his own bank—his partner in ownership—to take a home-equity loan that'll boost his loan-to-value ratio to 110 percent. A stupid business expanding so fast that it literally has stores on opposite corners (both of which sell coffee for three times what the Pakistani guy across the street sells it for), because banks are begging it to take cheap cash.

And now... I'm happy. Not that people are hurting or that retirement accounts have been massacred or that many will lose livelihoods. No, I'm happy about the return of a little bit of goddamn common sense. The next treasury secretary will inherit a dramatically changed financial landscape. He will have to resist the temptation to create regulations that slow American business to a crawl. The idea that we can achieve reward while forbidding risk is as childish as the idea that put us in this pickle—that all the reward had been achieved without assuming risk. He should immediately erase the bailout safety net. You lever your bank past the point of danger, you don't get bailed out, you get taken over. And prosecuted.

And the next Fed chairman, or this guy if he stays on, should be a big enough man to accept the "blame" if his tenure includes a recession. Allowing the dust to settle from time to time—which Greenspan lacked the courage to do—will separate the viable ideas and reasonable expansion plans from the interest-only loans and Starbucks.

The sky is not falling. Things are going to be fine. This tectonic shift will probably spell the permanent end of several cherished American financial axioms. And we'll be better off for their demise.

Myth: Investment banks are an indispensable source of "innovation" and liquidity.

There are now no (major) investment banks. And no one will miss them. Like lawyers, these parasites basically create nothing, add no value. And now they don't exist. The global financial system will survive not giving tranches of ten thousand combined mortgages from the farthest-flung sections of America. And whoever invented these CDOs, these "collateralized debt obligations," should... find meaningful work.

Myth: Home ownership is an unalloyed good.

It's not. Not just because it's expensive and illiquid, but because it's *inappropriate* for many kinds of people. And I don't mean just in a class-division way. (Although that's true, too, and Fannie and Freddie never should have been tasked with the social mission to "improve" the lots of poor people by saddling them with loans they couldn't repay.) I mean for economic reasons. Fifty percent is about the maximum number of households that should ever own homes in a society. A modern, efficient workforce needs its members to be mobile and nimble and not tethered to homes they barely own and cannot sell.

Myth: "Deregulation" caused this.

We're so, so, so not deregulated. The institutions that are failing are some of the most heavily regulated in the world. Investment banks are regulated by the SEC, the Federal Trade Commission, state attorneys general, and state banking commissions. But too many regulators are as bad as no regulators—none of them feels responsible since a failure can be blamed on all the others. Hedge funds are a great example. For years, people have been crying about the wild world of hedge funds. But hedge funds have actually held up well during this meltdown. Effective regulations are needed and possible. But any rush to clamp down willy-nilly will result in an even deeper freeze on liquidity and push this crisis deeper and longer. If you're an investment banker or a mortgage broker, yes, these will be prolonged and difficult times. You should consider coaching Little League. But the rest of us? On October 10, I bought GE stock for $18.77 and Altria for $16.58—wildly profitable companies with price-earnings ratios under 10 and yields of about 7 percent. There are great American companies paying out suddenly valuable American dollars as dividends. I just can't cry too hard when the stock market is holding the greatest sale of my lifetime. It's enough to make me want to write a bullish finance column.

Ken Kurson is a contributing editor at Esquire and executive vice-president of Jamestown Associates, a political-consulting firm in Washington, D.C.





The Sexiest Car in the World

THAT'S WHAT A JAGUAR SHOULD BE. THE XF IS A GOOD START. BUT WHETHER JAG'S ELUSIVE NEW OWNER AGREES IS ANYONE'S GUESS. BY EZRA DYER

Jaguar is one of the most enigmatic car companies on the planet. By that I mean nobody seems to know exactly what Jaguar means here in the twenty-first century. Is Jaguar a curvaceous BMW alternative (the XK coupe and convertible), a conservative British counterpoint to Audi (the XJ sedan), or a re-badged European Ford (the ill-fated X-Type)? It's all of those things, hence the confusion.

The challenge faced by Jaguar's new owner, Tata, is that most of Jag's recent models have been tied so tightly to the car's heritage. Despite its sophisticated aluminum chassis, the current XJ looks like the previous XJ which looked a lot like the one before that. The XK is aging quite well but is nonetheless a riff on an old tune. In terms of setting a new direction, then, the burden lies on the all-new XF sedan. If the new XF is not quite U2's *Achtung Baby*, it's at least Journey with Arnel Pineda—comfortingly familiar, yet novel enough to get the casual fan interested again.

Whatever you think of the XF's looks (I see shades of Maserati Quattroporte in the front-side profile, a bit of BMW X6 in the roofline), it doesn't ape the Jags of yore the way its predecessor, the S-Type, did. The sheet metal of the fenders looks as if it were pulled down taut over the wheels, and the long slope of the rear glass terminates in a stubby little trunk lid that suggests the lines of a coupe more than a sedan. I'm a bit bummed that Jag didn't damn the torpedoes and go for the more rakish lines of the C-XF concept car, but that decision probably stems from Jaguar's limited resources—Mercedes and BMW can dabble with wild styling and accept the risk on cars like the CLS and X6, but Jaguar can't afford to have its entry-level sedan thought of as a niche vehicle. It needs a solid mainstream success, and so the XF's more whimsical elements are confined to the interior.

Start the car and the tumescent shift knob rises from the center console. (Prepare for the inevitable Austin Powers/Shaguar/"Or are you just happy to see me?" jokes.) The dashboard vents spin around to reveal themselves in a motorized welcome dance. The glove-box release and overhead lights are actuated via proximity sensors. Isn't this all sort of gimmicky? Absolutely. But if Jag wants Lexus or BMW shoppers to pay attention, it helps to inject a measure of whimsy and fun.

The XF drives as well as anything in its class, exhibiting Jag's silky ride-handling balance and a respectable level of hustle. Its V-8's, one naturally aspirated and one supercharged, are both sweet-singing devices, but the base motor's 300 hp is further evidence of Jag's difficult decisions on where to spend money. When the Camaro's base V-6 has the same power as your V-8, it's time for a new motor, and one is apparently forthcoming in the

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form of a new 5-liter V-8. I'd ask Jag all about it, but the thing is, they won't tell me much. Or anything.

Ever since Ford sold Jaguar to the Indian conglomerate Tata in March for $2.3 billion (the same Tata that owns the three cups of Eight O'Clock coffee I drank this morning, along with ninety-seven other companies that make everything from steel to utilities to the itty-bitty $2,500 Nano car going on sale in India in early 2009), Jaguar and Tata have clammed up tight. I sought to ask someone at Tata a pretty straightforward question about what they think of the XF—a car Tata inherited, since it was rolled out at the end of the Ford regime—and how it might fit into Jag's future direction. From two different angles, I was stiff-armed on this question by Jag PR people, both of whom claimed that Jag is essentially autonomous, and thus there's no reason to ask Tata about its future. Jag gonna do what Jag gonna do. Next question.

I don't know about you, but if I chip in on a pizza, I want some say on the toppings, and if I spend $2.3 billion on Jaguar and Land Rover, I probably have an opinion on what sort of cars they decide to build. So I skipped a few steps up the ladder from Tata Motors to the overall Tata Group. The Indian mother ship responded with a couple of oblique, eye-glazing quotes from the chairman, Ratan Tata. One, culled directly from the company's annual report, included the line, "There is a need to introduce a greater number of attractive products for both brands." Okay, but how? Better fuel economy? A new styling language, along the lines of what Cadillac's done with its lineup? Tie-dyed seat covers? Because if you've seen the Tata trucks all over the place in India, you know they usually look as if they were painted by Wavy Gravy during the biggest acid trip of his life.

I approached a friend who grew up among the few fraternal Indian power elite and surely knows a few players at Tata, one of whom might be willing to proffer an opinion on Jag. "Cannot help you," he wrote. "Tata is a very tight company." Shortly thereafter, Tata announced that Jaguar and Land Rover would no longer be reporting monthly sales figures. Tight company, indeed. So the XF might be selling quite well. Or not.

Tata's attitude of obfuscation is certainly frustrating when you're trying to glean a ray of insight into Jaguar's trajectory. But in the grander picture, the Indians' standoffishness is refreshing, because there are very few real surprises in the automotive world anymore. Pressured to make a splash, car companies announce their plans years in advance. (The Chevy Volt already seems like an old friend even though it's not slated for production until 2010.) Camouflaged prototypes are relentlessly pursued by spy photographers. The introductions at major car shows these days are a parade of foregone conclusions, victims of the constant information onslaught. I can tell you that Porsche sold six manual-transmission Cayenne V-6's in the U.S. in August. They sent out an e-mail.

With Tata at the helm, Jaguar might become a company that can come out of left field and deliver an actual surprise once in a while. Will the XF get a new 500-hp V-8? Will the next XK be a hybrid? The man named Ratan doesn't have to tell us, and that's actually kind of great.

But since nobody at Tata is talking, allow me to step in with a few modest suggestions. Jaguar should build a sexy $50,000 sports car to introduce younger buyers to the brand and recapture some of that sixties mojo. It should reinvent the XJ as a radically styled four-seat sedan, à la the Mercedes CLS, because nobody's riding bitch in an $80,000 Jaguar anyway. The XF should get faster. An SUV? I wouldn't rule it out, if I could figure out a way to cast such a thing in an environmentally sensible light, perhaps with a monster diesel under the hood. And this, Mr. Tata, a simple mission statement, if you will: A Jaguar should either make you want to have sex or make someone want to have sex with you. Step to it, chaps. ■



DRIVING IN A LAND WHERE EVERYONE BELIEVES IN REINCARNATION

While Tata is stepping into the high end of the market with Jaguar, it's simultaneously launching itself into the very bottom with the new Nano, which is billed as the least expensive car in the world. This is India's Model T, the car that will put the masses on wheels, and environmentalists are already fretting about the impact of 250,000 new cars a year spewing their hydrocarbons across the subcontinent. However that concern is a little bit misguided because a good number of those Nanos are actually going to reduce their owners' carbon footprint. Like, by 100 percent, permanently.

When I was in India about ten years ago, the country was just introducing divided highways, which you'd think would help reduce the chaos. Not so much. I saw a tractor coming at us head-on in the wrong direction on the highway. No big deal. At the side of one country road, a Tata heavy truck sat in a crumpled mass, locals calmly organizing the fruit that had fallen off the back. They didn't pay much attention to the driver, who was right there, hanging out—of the windshield. One day, our minibus driver pulled over because of a mechanical difficulty. It turned out the horn had broken. And believe me, without that, you may as well call a tow truck.

Into this fracas goes the Nano, a car whose $2,500 price tag was probably not reached through the indulgent inclusion of comprehensive safety equipment. Good luck, Nano drivers, and remember: If might equals right, you don't want to be wrong.

—E.D.

I DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU, BUT IF I CHIP IN ON A PIZZA, I WANT SOME SAY ON THE TOPPINGS, AND IF I SPEND $2.3 BILLION ON JAGUAR, I PROBABLY HAVE AN OPINION ON WHAT SORT OF CARS THEY DECIDE TO BUILD



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PROFILE

LORD DUMPLING'S MAGICAL WATER MACHINE

Dean Kamen has invented many, many things. Now he has an idea that could save tens of millions of lives. But no one cares.

BY JOHN H. RICHARDSON
PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICHAEL EDWARDS







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Here comes Dean Kamen on a Segway, zipping down the hill of his private island like something out of a Bond movie. He floats past his private helicopter. Past his amphibious landing craft. His lighthouse rises up behind him. He's wearing his uniform: the one he wears whether he's tinkering with an engine or visiting the White House; work boots, blue jeans, and a short-sleeved work shirt. He's fifty-seven but still skinny as a ten-year-old, with a lean face and full head of Superman hair. He wears a dead-serious expression as he's perched up there on his electric gizmo, even looks a bit regal, which is sort of appropriate when you consider the rules of his alternate universe—on his tiny private island off the coast of Connecticut, he's not just the man who invented the Segway and the stair-climbing wheelchair called the iBOT and the first portable dialysis machine and a new water filter called the Slingshot that could literally change the world, if he could *only* get the *damn world* to *cooperate*. He's also Lord Dumpling, leader of the Empire of North Dumpling. Dumpie to his friends. He sort of seems serious about this, in a whimsical way, and now Lord Dumpling sweeps right by on his royal scooter, heeding down to the landing to greet his guests from America.

He has seceded from the United States, you see, having notified the president himself, and Kamen's vision of better living through technology is under assault from the usual gaggle of small minds. As his guests clamber off the boat and walk down the dock to greet Dumpling, two clean-cut young engineer types rush out of the bushes waving signs that say COALITION AGAINST TECHNOLOGY and GREEN IS FOR WIMPS.

"Protesters," Kamen says, the same benighted fools who failed to immediately ban cars and change the way cities are designed to welcome the Segway.

As the protesters drop their signs and go back to work, his bemused guests follow him up the hill, past a sign reading DUMP DUMPIE IN '08, plodding like mere humans as Kamen glides along beside them.

When they reach the house, a flawlessly renovated caretaker's cottage built around the lighthouse, Kamen urges them to enjoy the catered lunch and slips off to join his eighty-three-year-old mother. As he will be happy to tell you, he rarely eats lunch and hasn't had breakfast in thirty years. Unless someone reminds him, he can go two or three days without eating anything at all.

He emerges again when the guests, thirty in all, gather in the living room, an elegant little space with views of Long Island Sound from every window. "My people told me, Dean, keep it simple," he begins. "Unfortunately, my greatest asset is ADD."

The man is small in stature, has a slight Long Island lilt, and tends to speak in italics. He's attracted a curious and enthusiastic group of scientists and business leaders to have them participate in transforming North Dumpling into the greenest nation on earth, and create a proof-of-concept center for all of Kamen's wild ideas.

And off he goes, proving his point with a dizzying mixture of dreams and statistics. "And remember, you can't leave. I run the boats. I run the helicopter. It's no coincidence we're on an island." So item one: Welcome to the first completely green nation in the world. Welcome to the first *carbon-neutral* nation in the world. You're here because you understand that advanced technology is not only better for the environment but that it's *cool products*, not clunky cars and harsh lights but sweet LEDs like the ones flashing overhead right now—see that rainbow of colors pulsing in sequence? Isn't that *cool*? They won't be commercially available until 2009! You're the first to see them! It takes just 90 watts to replace *1,200 watts* of regular lights! The Dumplonian Empire has zero tolerance for filaments!

But wait, let's introduce everybody. Here's a guy, from Philips, who won the National Inventor of the Year Award. The LEDs are his babies. Here's another guy who's inventing giant kites that will produce megawatts of power—*really big* kites. Here's a woman who planned the biggest charity event in history, pulling in $71 million in a single night for the Robin Hood Foundation. And the former chief technology officer at Goldman Sachs. And a guy from a little company called Coca-Cola. And a guy

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from another little company called Wal-Mart. "We were worried he wouldn't feel comfortable, so, for the first time, the Dumplonian Empire granted a commercial variance so they could have a store here." Of course, one of their superstores is larger than the whole empire, so Kamen gave them a three-inch-by-three-inch plot, appropriately scaled to the tiny island.

But where were we? Oh yeah, the green nation. That business started six weeks ago, when the Coast Guard cut the cable to North Dumpling. They only maintained the cable to run the lighthouse and now they're running it on photovoltaics, so Kamen had the option of crying in his beer or making lemons into lemonade, which is when he decided to deploy the Slingshot. The "sling" is Lord Dumpling's revolutionary new version of the Stirling engine, a no-emission power source that engineers have been trying to perfect for almost two hundred years. Instead of the tiny explosions that drive the pistons of a standard internal-combustion engine, the Stirling drives its piston by forcing gas from one chamber to another in a perfectly closed system. He's pretty much got it nailed, aside from a few tweaks and a few niggling questions about who will pay for it. The "shot" is his equally revolutionary vapor-compression water distiller, which can make pure medicinal-grade water out of anything that's wet, even urine or toxic waste—water so clean you could inject it into your arm. Together the sling and the shot could save millions of lives. That's why he spent $50 million of his own money developing the prototypes and testing them in Third World villages, and *they work*, and we have to get the word out because *50 percent of all human illness is caused by waterborne pathogens*.

Item number two is a benefit for FIRST, the robotics competition Kamen started in 1992. This is even more important because you get what you celebrate in a free market and America builds monuments to the things it values and unfortunately most of those monuments are giant sports arenas, which *don't contribute anything to the future*. Why waste so much time on bounce-bounce-throw when FIRST can turn aimless kids into the engineers of the future?

So he had to form an organization that would change the culture of the entire country and make all the kids in America understand that science and engineering really are cool and fun and if they don't study hard, they're going to end up *dumb*. He had to make the whole country see what he saw—that if some foreign power came into this country to pervert our kids from doing the things that sustain our quality of life the way sports does, we would find them and prove that they were treasonously undermining our way of life *and kill them*.

In its first year, Kamen started with twenty-eight schools and signed up twenty-eight companies and universities—giants like General Electric and MIT—to mentor students. In January he gave the teams shoe boxes filled with parts. Six weeks later, they played the first game in a high school gym. Within a few years, he had sixty teams. Then a hundred. Now it's in thirteen thousand schools and thirty-eight countries. Last year they gave out $10 million in scholarships. It should be as big as the Olympics!

So here are some visa forms, please fill them out, and if you don't become a FIRST supporter by the end of the day, your visa will be revoked and this will be the last time you see North Dumpling Island.

Kamen's last agenda item is a kite-surfing contest, because the event has to be fun or nobody will want to come. So he has invited famous kite surfers like Larry Page and Sergey Brin from Google and Richard Branson of Virgin to come compete against the Dumplonians. That's what he wants, the Slingshot and FIRST and the kite surfing all wrapped into a big media event that will show the world that technology is cool and fun and also—minor point—*the last best hope of mankind at a time when the lunatics are running the asylum*. "Use your imaginations," he commands. "I would like, by the end of the day, to have a sense of what you're going to do to make these things all come together."

But right now, you probably all have headaches. So let's take a break. Come out this door and walk past the three-inch Wal-Mart—that tiny gyroscope provides all its light and power—and check out this twelve-foot-high version of Stonehenge. Squeeze in, there's plenty of room for everyone. They used to sacrifice virgins here back in the early days, he says. "But it was politically incorrect and we couldn't find any virgins, so we switched to lawyers. That turned out to be an enormous crowd-pleaser."

Next stop, the basement. Now you're in the heart of the machine. Here's the vapor-compression distiller. The vapor goes through this hose and comes into the turbine heat exchangers here and there's no noise and no consumables and no activated charcoal and no chemicals and no filter and no membranes. It makes a million liters of water in a thousand days with no human intervention. The goal is to get volume up and cost down. Maybe Wal-Mart can help? Coca-Cola?

And here's the Stirling, handcrafted by some of the most brilliant engineers in the world. It's running on propane now but a piece of burning cow dung will generate enough power to run a small refrigerator and charge a cell phone and run all the house lights—and remember, more than 20 percent of the peo-



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ple alive today have never used electricity *They need the tools* So who's going to step up? Who will spend the millions and millions it will take to put this baby into production?

But enough fun and games. Now it's time to work

And the guests obey, breaking into groups to tackle the issues separately Could they anchor a barge off the island for a technology display area? Should they make the visitors buy carbon offsets? Should they get some FIRST graduates to come display their robots?

Every so often, Kamen jumps in to goose them along. When the guy from Wal-Mart offers a contribution, he whips out an ink stamp that says DUMPLOMATIC STATUS and bangs it down on his passport. "By the way," he says, pulling some funny-colored bills out of his pocket, "if that gets you in trouble, sometimes a few Dumplings can help."

Alas, the day ends in a palace revolt "You need a clear story," says the lady from Coke "You need a data point where people can enter"

"You've got to have a primary goal," says the woman who planned the largest charity event in history

"As Lord Dumpling's Secretary of Cynicism," says another guest, "what aspect of this do you want to optimize? The green nation? FIRST? The kite surfing? You have too many ideas."

"The answer is yes," says Kamen

At this juncture, the average human might conclude that Dean Kamen is totally out of his mind

AS IT TURNS OUT, the day on North Dumpling was Kamen restrained Today he's in his office in Manchester, New Hampshire, wearing his uniform, sitting under a full-length portrait of himself wearing his uniform, talking about FIRST and growing up and the Slingshot and FIRST and FIRST some more He goes on for hours There's a whiff of Maximum Leader in the room His friends say this is normal for him, that he is in fact thinking as he speaks, but the word *perseverating* keeps coming to mind.

Straightened out so it makes some kind of sense, this is his story

When he was a little kid growing up on the southshore of Long Island, still so young he didn't know how to read, someone told him the tale of David and Goliath The slingshot is what stuck in his mind "Here's this little guy with a really big problem, a Goliath of a problem, and he realized he could take a stone and a slingshot and solve that problem *Technology is cool* " That thought germinated while he soaked up the role models around him His father was an artist who made a living drawing comic books like *Tales from the Crypt* and *Weird Science* He was working when Dean got up in the morning and still working when he went to bed at night, which taught him the importance of doing something you love. His mother taught accounting in high school and that gave him a taste for the business world His older brother was a brilliant student who dissected rats in the basement and went on to get his M.D. and his Ph.D in the same day His younger brother and sister loved to work with tools and do home-construction projects But Kamen felt stupid He didn't understand why a hot glass of water on the counter gradually got cooler Why didn't it get hotter? What were the rules?

He assumed that the grown-ups understood. Then he realized they didn't Then he realized—he was about thirteen at the time—that he could figure out the rules by himself deducing the laws of nature from first principles. That's when he stopped caring what anyone else thought.

He became spectacularly stubborn His father called him a "human irritant." One of his teachers called him "Dino the Relentless." As his little brother, Mitch, puts it, "He was always focused on what he wanted to do, and nobody could ever talk him into doing something he didn't want to do "

Shortly after that, he discovered Sir Isaac Newton. A kindred spirit! He wasn't alone! His excitement is still vivid almost fifty years later "$F = ma$, that's a pretty simple linear equation Force equals mass times acceleration. You can't come up with a more simple statement that's not trivial. Yet it describes the motion of billiard balls and of galaxies. On a galactic scale, you can predict where the *next eclipse* will be because of $F = ma$ You can predict where *atomic collisions* happen because of $F = ma$. That's *astounding*"

The rest of Kamen's story is scientific legend, and he doesn't mind telling it how he started tinkering with transistors and built a light box that pulsed along with the family stereo, how he snuck into the Hayden Planetarium in New York to install a new light show and launch an electronics career that was earning him $60,000 a year when he was just out of high school, how his brother came home from medical school and suggested he invent an automated way to deliver drugs, and so he set up a machine shop in his parents' basement, developed a working prototype, wrangled a rave review from *The New England Journal of Medicine*, put his younger brother to work on assembly and his mother on product testing; how he hired an architect to jack up the house and expand the basement into a small factory; how he refused to go to college classes and focused his relentless will on bending the Worcester Polytechnic Institute to his purposes "I said, 'I m paying my tuition to have the entire faculty as business consultants I recognize that is not consistent with your model, which is, You know better than I and I have to take this much math and these electives, and all that stuff is valuable, but *right now* I'm focused, I'm allowed to make a rational decision, I can pay you this tuition and avail myself of this extraordinary faculty, but I'm not going to waste my time in class because the opportunity costs would be too high.'"

Eleven years after he started, he sold AutoSyringe to Baxter International for $30 million Pondering his next move, he realized he had put more than a decade into developing one idea. "I said, Wow, you don't have a lot of cycles left. I don't want to spend my whole life building a company around this product or that product I want to focus on *lots* of things "

The answer was Deka Research & Development, one of the most unusual companies in the country—a state-of-the art engineering lab tucked away in a series of old brick industrial buildings in Manchester with few rules and little paperwork, built on his royalties and staffed with three hundred brilliant and quirky engineers dedicated to a single purpose.

Helping Dean Kamen change the world

NOW HE'S GOT TO MOVE This is what he does He roams the halls of Deka like a starving animal rooting for food Here's a young engineer working on a tiny round circuit board for a new invention that could revolutionize the way heart surgeons do cut and

Sometimes you click web, and let's be honest, you're not sure what to expect. But this browser sure looks, like, well, like a browser. All my favorite sites are here. They just seem so fast, and now I can take them with me. This is 3G? Me likey.



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stitch. "How much of this have we run so far?" he asks.

"Most all of it. This is probably pretty darn close to what would be on a final version."

"Jesus Christ. How many pins did you just pop?"

"I think it's a ten pin, something like that. It's teeny. I think it's the smallest connector made, just about."

They go on like that for a while, their voices quiet. This is when all the spinning gears and gyroscopes in Kamen's head line up. As long as he's staring at the circuit board, he has the quiet focus of a doctor studying a patient, the devotional calm of a priest taking confession.

It helps explain why his engineers are willing to start well below market rates, fired up by the chance to work with someone who can push them beyond their limits. It also helps explain why a man with such humane ambitions never had children and scorns marriage. (The Dumplonian visa application asks if you have ever been married "or otherwise institutionalized.") He says it's because kids would be "too much risk, that he couldn't live with himself if he didn't like them and became a rotten parent, oblivious to how Vulcan that reasoning might sound to a normal person.

He scorns marriage. And kids would be "too much risk." He says he couldn't live with himself if he didn't like them and became a rotten parent, oblivious to how Vulcan that might sound to a normal person.

Finally the engineer shows him how it all fits together.

"You drop this guy in and that guy should just fit on top and click into place," the engineer says.

"*God*, that's nice."

"And that's it for assembly."

"That's so nice."

He moves on. Down the stairs, up the stairs, into a big loft where a group of engineers puzzle over a titanium robotic arm commissioned by the Department of Defense. Kamen calls it "Luke" after Luke Skywalker, the *Star Wars* hero who lost a hand to Darth Vader's lightsaber. Saying a quick hello to Matt DeWitt, an Iraq veteran who lost both his arms in the battle of Fallujah and now serves as one of Luke's test pilots, he approaches another young engineer. This one is hunched over a thin piece of plastic shaped like a foot. Veined like a leaf with wires and sensors, it serves as a remote controller for the arm.

"We're modifying it to get it to work better for Matt," he says. "We're not getting a really good response."

"How long will it take?"

"Half an hour or so."

When he comes back, DeWitt stands at a table. He's got the titanium arm strapped on and he's stacking plastic cups. The arm whirs and spins and the metal fingers close on a plastic cup. It's soft and dents a little bit. To give DeWitt a sense of how hard his fingers are pushing, there's a pressure sensor just above his shoulder blade that vibrates soft or strong.

He whirs a cup across the table and drops it into place.

"Nice job," Kamen says.

"Give him some Skittles," one engineer suggests.

A minute later, the arm whirs and spins and the metal fingers close on a tiny candy. DeWitt concentrates and brings it to his mouth.

"Look at *that*," Kamen says.

"It's more impressive when it's something small like that," whispers another engineer.

"We do it with grapes too."

DeWitt says the arm is pretty easy to use and not as heavy as it looks. "It only bothers me kinda because I've lost so much of my arm here. But it's manageable. I could wear it all day."

He picks up an electric screwdriver to demonstrate the chuck grip. The mechanical finger moves over the drill's trigger. It has a black metal fingernail, which looks oddly beautiful. DeWitt concentrates and the drill whines. "That's awesome," Kamen says. "Compared to the other stuff that's out there, it's just light-years ahead."

Now they have to work it till it breaks. Then DeWitt can take it home and break it again, steps on the long journey from prototype to product.

THESE PROJECTS ARE all part of Kamen's day job, as he likes to call it. This means they're relatively practical and funded by outside sources. The tricky part is getting the funding in the first place, a process that usually begins with Kamen fixating on a pressing human need and following his nose with little regard for precedent or practicality. One day, for example, he saw a man in a wheelchair struggling to get over a sidewalk curb. Instead of trying to build a better wheelchair, he asked himself what that man really needed. To be able to go up stairs, to cross rough terrain, to rise up and look normal people in the eye. It hit him in the place where Lord Dumpling was born: where the highest good is independence. So he was pondering all that and he got out of the shower and slipped on the wet floor, windmilling his legs to regain his balance. That was the solution! Wheels that could spin back and forth so precisely and so fast, you could balance on just two of them.

People said it was impossible, but Kamen hates that word. Don't tell me it's impossible, he says, tell me you can't do it. Tell me it's never been done. Because the only real laws in this world—the only things we really *know*—are the two postulates of relativity, the three laws of Newton, the four laws of thermodynamics, and Maxwell's equation—no, scratch that, the only things we really know are Maxwell's equation, the three laws of Newton, the two postulates of relativity, and the periodic table. That's all we know that's *true*. All the rest are man's laws.

Thinking this way, he made the iBOT come true. It's an amazing accomplishment, but the practical issues still dog him—at $26,100, it costs way too much for most wheelchair users. Same with the Segway, which he put $50 million of his own money into before giving any serious thought to the problem of selling it.

Which brings us to the alcove where a pair of engineers are working on the Slingshot, another supposedly impossible dream. He needed a way to power the iBOT, so why not reinvent the engine? And he needed a cheap way to provide sterilized water to his home dialysis machines, so why not reinvent the water distiller? Then he realized that fresh water and electric power were a Goliath of a problem for little guys all over the Third World and the dream got even bigger. Was it practical? Would it be cost-effective? Would anyone be willing to finance it? Who cares? The little guy needed a slingshot! Dean Kamen could give it to him! He could combine two big ideas into one really big idea! More than fifteen years and another $50 million later, he's still trying. [*continued on page 190*]



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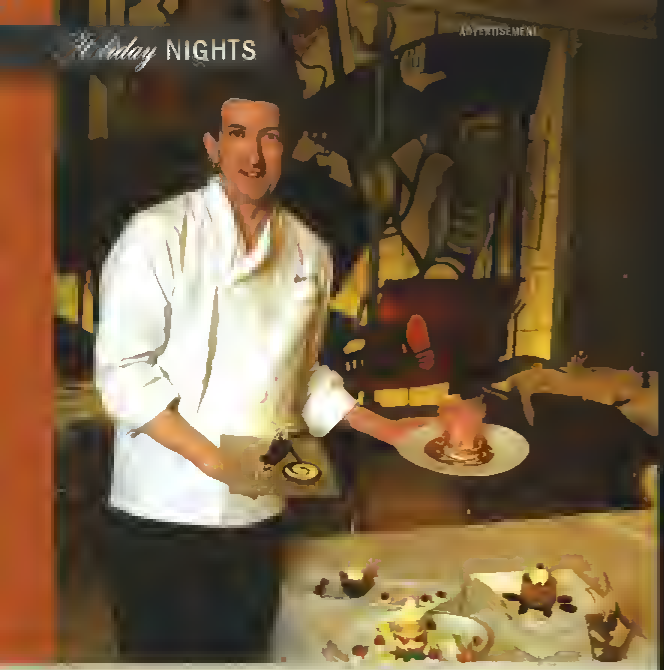
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Five Tips for Hosting a Holiday Party

BY PASTRY CHEF MARTIN HOWARD

1. Throw a party serving everyone's two favorite treats: drinks and dessert! You can make tiny bite-size dessert hors d'oeuvres, and pass them or go over the top with a dessert buffet. Either way B&B® Liqueur is a perfect ingredient for pastries and cocktails during the holidays since it's made with some of the spices you associate with this festive time of year, such as cinnamon, nutmeg, clove and vanilla.
2. Another key ingredient to remember is music. A nice mix of holiday tunes, lounge and dance is my way to keep the party up and peppy!
3. The ingredients in the drinks should complement the ingredients in the desserts. Fruit desserts go well with lighter, sweet drinks, while chocolate desserts can handle a decadent drink such as the "Chocolate Pharaoh" or "Bernes and Bliss." Of course you may find fun combinations you love together; drink pairing is a matter of personal taste.

   I find B&B Liqueur also enhances the flavor of many tropical fruits like bananas, coconut and pineapple. The complexity of plants and spices found in B&B Liqueur can perk up just about any dessert, making the ordinary extraordinary!
4. Serve a signature cocktail or two! The "Belle of the Ball" would make a great drink to pair with the "Botanical Breeze" giving you a fun drink choice for both woman and men. Then there's always the "Beauteous Bette" and "Bandit's Bliss" recipes for a sinful pair sure to get the party started. Make sure you have plenty of ice!
5. Perfect recipes for winter: Hot Mulled Cider with a splash of B&B Liqueur, Pumpkin Pie Martini Cocktail, White Hot Chocolate with Cocoa Cream.

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Dessert Pairing:

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8 oz.	Unsweetened chocolate
4 oz.	Bittersweet chocolate
1 c.	Butter, soft
1 c.	Sugar
1/3 c.	Water
5	Eggs
1/4 c.	Sugar
1/4 tsp	Salt
1 tbl.	B&B® Liqueur

In a small pot, put 1 cup sugar and 1/3 cup water, bring to a boil and set aside. Melt chocolates in a bowl over a pot of simmering water. Remove and stir in butter with a rubber spatula.

Then stir in sugar syrup in a slow steady stream. Stir in B&B Liqueur. In the bowl of an electric mixer, whip eggs, sugar and salt until light and thick.

Fold eggs into chocolate mixture one half at a time. Pour into a greased and papered 9" cake pan. Place in a larger pan with 1" of hot water. Bake at 275° for about 40 minutes. Let cool for 20 minutes and turn out onto cake plate or cardboard circle. Dust with powdered sugar if desired.

Serve at room temperature.



Cocktail Pairing:

BABBLING BROOK

1 ½	Part DEWARS' 12 Blended Scotch Whisky
3/4	Part B&B® Liqueur
1/4	Part absinthe
1	Lemon twist, as garnish

Stir over ice and strain into a chilled cocktail glass. Add the garnish.



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A VERY BARRY CHRISTMAS

By Barry Sonnenfeld



In retrospect, I'm wondering if my Christmas wish list this year should have included more sweaters, woodburning stoves, canning techniques, and other tools for self-preservation in tougher times. On the other hand, maybe the only way out of our economic sadness is to spend on gadgets that will bring a little joy into our daily mess. Yeah. That's the holiday spirit. And on that note, let me say that it is amazing how far digital technology—from cameras to flat-screens—has come in the four years I've presented this guide. So start giving! At least that's what I'm telling the wife.

Barry Sonnenfeld, who looks a little like the Santa puppet here, is a film and TV director and producer and Esquire's Digital Man columnist

Puppet and set design by Bent Image Lab





In addition to performing a lot like a good DSLR (although it doesn't have interchangeable lenses) the **Casio Exilim EX-F1** ($1,000; casio.com) has the unique ability to shoot high-speed photography—still photo bursts of up to sixty frames per second and video at 1,200 fps. Watch the YouTube videos of Mentos being dropped into bottles of cola shot with this thing and you'll see what I mean. A bit of a trick camera, but if you can have more than one, a lot of fun.

Weighing nothing, the **Flip Mino video recorder** ($180; theflip.com) charges, automatically downloads to your computer, and can upload to YouTube through its built-in USB port. It can shoot an hour of footage, although the resolution is pretty much suitable only for e-mail. I use it as a memo pad. If I'm having dinner with friends and want to remember a funny conversation to use in a script, I take the small Mino out of my pocket and place it on the table.



The **Nissan GT-R** (starting at $76,840; gtrnissan.com) is the fastest car I have ever driven, and that's including a Lotus Super 7, a Corvette, and a Porsche Turbo. It's like driving a video game—so powerful that you constantly spin the tires with its super acceleration, even though it has all-wheel drive. With very specific Japanese styling and a great-looking rear end, the youngsters will love it. At around eighty grand with a few features, it's a bargain.

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Sony MDR-NC500D digital noise-canceling headphones

With my refusal to live in Los Angeles, I'm flying way more than I'd like. Which gives me plenty of time to appreciate the **Sony MDR-NC500D digital noise-canceling headphones** ($400; sonystyle.com). They reduce ambient noise better than any others I've tested—Sony claims it's 99 percent compared with the 85 percent reduction of its analog set. When Chloe, the fifteen-year-old daughter is in a specific state, I can drown her out, too, although not nearly at 99 percent.



Edle driving alarm

After a late meeting in New York City, the one-hundred-mile drive back to East Hampton can be rough. The **Edle antisleep driving alarm** ($15; thinkgeek.com) earpiece senses when your drowsy head drops below 30 degrees and blasts a screeching sound to make sure you're still awake. My buddy suggested I save the money and just tape a nail to my chest below my chin, but I'd spend more dry-cleaning my clothes every time I spiked myself.

Sony HDR-CX12 and Canon Vixia HG21 camcorders

The era of MiniDV tape is finally over, thank God. Two camcorders I really like are the **Sony HDR-CX12** (pictured, $900; sonystyle.com) and the **Canon Vixia HG21** ($1,299; canonusa.com). Both are small and take SD cards or Memory Sticks, and the Canon also has a built-in 120-gig hard drive. The Sony, which comes with a four-gigabyte Memory Stick, also allows you to take 7.6-megapixel still pictures while shooting video—you can set it to automatically capture a still image every time its software recognizes a smile.



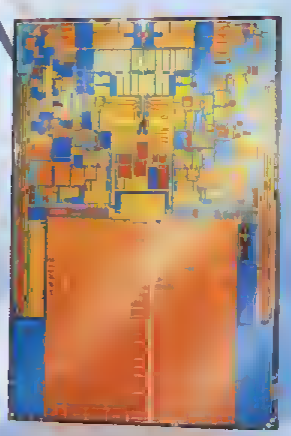
It's expensive, but the **D700** (pictured; $3,000; nikonusa.com) takes incredibly sharp pictures in shockingly low light. Since it has a full-sized chip, it shoots in exactly the same format, with the same depth of field, as a 35mm camera. You'll never even need its built-in flash. The 12.3-megapixel **D90** ($1,300) is another great DSLR that uses the same low-light technology as the pricier Nikons and (a first for DSLRs) also shoots high-definition video.

Nikon D700 and D90 DSLR cameras



CONTINUED ON PAGE 18

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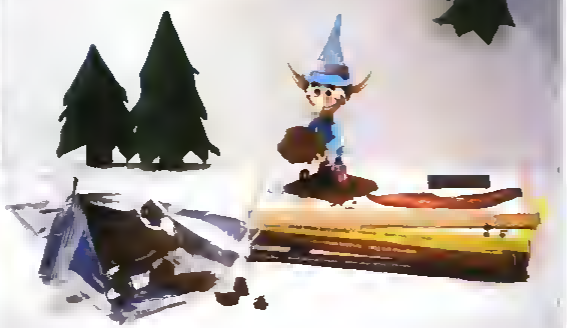
Nikon Coolpix P6000 camera

There are a bunch of great new point-and-shoot cameras available for gifting this year depending on your specific needs. The 14.7 megapixel **Panasonic Lumix DMC-FX150** ($400; panasonic.com) below is my favorite shirt-pocketable camera, largely because of its sharp Leica lens. Although it's a little too clunky for your pocket, the 13.5 megapixel **Nikon Coolpix P6000** ($500; nikonusa.com) above, shoots great low-light photos and has a built-in GPS that automatically records where you took the picture. It also accepts a (clunky) wide-angle attachment on top of the standard 28mm.

Panasonic Lumix DMC-FX150 camera



Vosges chocolate bars



I was first attracted to **Vosges chocolates** ($7.50 a bar; vosgeschocolate.com) when I heard about the company's bacon and chocolate bar. What could be better than that? Actually, its deep milk chocolate Naga bar, made with Indian curry powder and coconut flakes, the d'Ollva bar, made with white chocolate and kalamata olives, and the Gianduja bar, which has almonds and caramelized hazelnuts. It's not digital, but it is delicious.

Dymo DiscPainter



I recently burned a CD with twenty-two covers of "Eve of Destruction" to give David Letterman when I appeared on his show. It's a long story, but I once explained to Dave that I used to sing that song to my baby daughter as a lullaby, and he doesn't let me forget it. The **Dymo DiscPainter** ($280; dymo.com) prints graphics—or even better, photographs—onto your CDs and DVDs. It is small, fast, and the image quality is first-rate.

Navigon 7200T and Garmin Nüvi 880 GPS



Navigon and Garmin make very good GPS displays. Their latest, the **Navigon 7200T** (pictured; $449; navigon.com) and the **Garmin Nüvi 880** ($900; garmin.com), both have voice control, excellent screens and live traffic. Both display the speed limit for the road you're on, and if you want them to, will alert you when you're going five, ten, or fifteen miles per hour over it. The Navigon screen is a little wider and shows highway signs and landmarks in impressively photo-realistic images, while the Garmin has a remote button you can place on the steering wheel that lets you talk to the device without leaning forward to touch it and potentially killing yourself.

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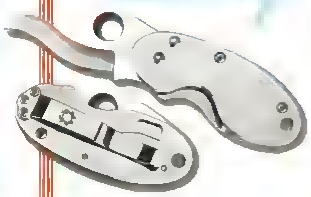
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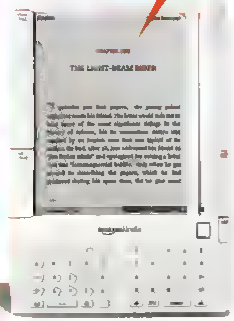


Spyderco Cricket knife



For the last ten years, the Christmas gift I've given to my staff and friends is nondigital: a **Spyderco knife**. The one everyone loves the most is the **Cricket** ($85; spyderco.com). It's thin and small and I rarely run into a friend who isn't packing his. Opening FedEx boxes, cutting off clothing tags—you'll be shocked how often you'll reach into your pocket for this little knife. Just make sure you don't try to take it on a plane.

Amazon Kindle reader



If I could give only one gift this year, it would be the **Amazon Kindle electronic-book reader** ($359; amazon.com/kindle). Recently I was on a flight to Los Angeles with Paul Giamatti, and he was carrying a huge, pretentious book, so I showed him my Kindle. He liked it so much, he was convinced to give up the heavy affectation.



Sony XEL-1 OLED TV

Sony chairman Sir Howard Stringer claims that he has the biggest and best flat-panel TV on his office wall, but I bet he can't take his eyes off the eleven-inch **Sony XEL-1 OLED TV** ($2,500; sonystyle.com) sitting on his desk. I believe him. The screen is so dense that all the images, even on the Weather Channel, look 3-D. If I were redoing my bedroom, I'd lose the plasma and put his-and-hers OLEDs on the night tables. Back to back. Sweetie, the wife, and I would giggle watching Letterman.

FoxLmb Bluetooth speaker



The battery-operated **FoxLmb Bluetooth speaker** ($249; soundmatters.com) is only about as big as a sunglasses case, and considering its size, it produces profoundly good sound. By connecting it to my Lenovo X300 computer via Bluetooth, I can listen to edited scenes of my television shows, or I can connect it to my iPhone to listen to music. When you get a call, the built-in microphone turns it into a hands-free speaker.

Piaggio MP3 500 scooter

When I tested the **Piaggio MP3 500** ($8,899; piaggiousa.com), a three-wheel 500-cc scooter, I encountered three people with expressions of wide-eyed fear: the woman in the convertible I almost crashed into, my buddy following me in his car, and me. The Piaggio does ninety miles per hour, gets sixty miles per gallon, and, with two front wheels, isn't as likely to throw you off when you hit a pothole. At stops, press a button to lock the front suspension, allowing the bike to remain upright without your feet on the ground. This is a great urban assault vehicle—if you're a braver man than I am.



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Esquire

THE BIGGEST MAN IN THE ROOM

He's also usually the funniest and best liked. So what's VINCE VAUGHN so afraid of? BY TRIS KONES

Photographs by Jake Chessum



VINCE VAUGHN LOOKS A LOT LIKE VINCE VAUGHN, ONLY BIGGER.

He's tall enough to have to duck through doorways, as he just did, and wide enough to spend a lot of time walking sideways through tight spaces, like this steakhouse. He wears a pair of old-school Nike sneakers that could be used as war canoes. About six and a half feet higher up, his hair rises like a wave above the low tide bench that is his forehead. (He calls it his five head.) His face is full, puffy enough to make him sometimes look as though he's fighting to keep his eyes open—not as though he's just woken up but as though he's never bothered to go to bed in the first place. His shirt is open at the collar, probably because it has to be. It's also open at the waist. Even from across this crowded restaurant, it's possible to see a jumbo slice of Vaughn's naked belly. It's too much to ignore, this great golden acreage, because he leads with it and because it's probably been kissed by Jennifer Aniston, standing on her tippy-toes. The man doesn't just occupy airspace, he fills it.

Like many giants, Vaughn gave up trying to hide a long time ago. (He's a regular at this restaurant, a touristy joint on the busiest stretch of Hollywood Boulevard, and he's fine with the table in the center of the room, surrounded.) Unlike most big men, however, his stature doesn't offer him any protection, leaving him twice defenseless, omnipresent without being ominous. Nobody's scared of Vince Vaughn. He sits down and almost immediately people come to spend time in his shadow, beating even the waiter. The first is a kind of Gothic-looking girl, a photographer who delivers her pitch in a disturbing monotone. "I never come up to people like this, but I would love to take your picture," she says, her eyes staring hard into his. She hands him her business card, which disappears inside his paw.

"Okay, sure, thanks, that's really cool," Vaughn says before she melts away, because he's midwestern and good with people and refreshingly aware that his job carries certain responsibilities. ("I like talking to people," he says. "I really do. They're usually very nice to me.")

It's only later, thinking back about the photographer, that he says, "Did she think I would say yes? Like that's something I might do? Yes! Terrific! Let me come to your loft so you can take pictures of me tied up on the bed."

But that's Vince Vaughn's trick.

If, in our imaginations, there really were a star who *might* do that—if the public were surveyed about which actor was most likely to end up in some stranger's house after a night on the town, rummaging through the fridge and playing Wii Tennis for all his life—Vaughn would be him. Most people who saw him in *Old School* or *Wedding Crashers* or *Dodgeball*—most of the people in this restaurant, including the housewife who told him not to be scared when she leaned in and the guy out in the parking lot who clapped him on the shoulder like an old friend—probably caught themselves thinking, That guy's just a regular guy. That guy's just like me.

The truth is, Vince Vaughn isn't really like them. He's the biggest man in the room. And because of his size, and because he inherited from his salesman father a competitive streak as well as a knack for volume business, he is voracious in his appetites (steak and lobster and creamed spinach) and his desires (to be loved). He has an almost pathological need to please his public.

He wants you to hear his name and smile as though by instinct, he wants you to see his face and laugh and not even know why. He wants you to see him everywhere you look and in the very next second to see in him whatever it is you want to see.

He's just opened his own factory. It's uncharacteristically inconspicuous, a low-rise lost among the transmission shops and burger joints just south of Hollywood. Only the parking lot out back betrays that something mountainous might be going on inside. There is a collection of big, expensive cars and a basketball hoop.

Vaughn is waiting for Jon Favreau to show up. They have been friends since meeting as actors on the set of *Rudy* fifteen years ago; by their collective force of will, they appeared together again in *Swingers*, the low-budget, vaguely autobiographical, smart, and funny film



COTTON SHIRT AND SILK TIE BY HUGO BOSS. GREY CUSP PAGE: COTTON SHIRT AND WOOL TROUSERS, PART OF SUIT BY DOLCE & GABBANA.



that Favreau wrote and Vaughn stole. *Swingers* was Vaughn's first real foray into the public consciousness. It was more than just a starring turn. Everywhere he went, he heard his catchphrases shouted back at him. He was on his way to becoming ubiquitous.

Today, Favreau and Vaughn are working together on a new script, one of the first projects housed here at Vaughn's nascent production company, Wild West Picture Show Productions. It's a comedy called *Couples Retreat*. It was Vaughn's idea. Had it been anybody else's, it probably would have been waved away like a fart, but because Vaughn wants to be loved, people want to love him back. They give him chances. It's about four couples who enter couples therapy on a tropical island. Who knows? Maybe it will be good after all. Favreau, fresh from the grand success of directing *Iron Man*, is writing the script, and every now and then, on days like today, they get together to bounce ideas off each other's backboards.

In the meantime, Vaughn has banked his second holiday movie, *Four Christmases* with Reese Witherspoon—because who can hate Christmas?—and he and his staff have been putting the finishing touches on a documentary, as yet untitled, that sounds fantastic.

A few years ago, Vaughn was traveling around Ireland with a friend when they found their way into troubled Belfast. It is a city with a lot of walls, most of which have been covered with murals, lamentations for what might have been and what once was. Visitors can tour them in the back of a black taxi, one of Belfast's few symbols of neutrality. Folded into the jump seat, lowering his head to window height, Vaughn saw the murals rise up like great ghosts in front of him, the centuries of war between Irish Protestants and Catholics captured in paint. He was enraptured. "They're beautiful," he says, "but they come out of such conflict. It's almost like blues music here. And what's most interesting to me is, there are walls that divide these neighborhoods, but from inside the taxi, they look identical. There's no way to tell them apart."

When Vaughn starts talking about the documentary, it feels like an elaborate setup for a joke, the build toward some improbable punch line. Because this is what we've come to expect from him: He is the clown. Only occasionally does he bristle at the label, because he is smart enough to know that it has served him well. (Earlier this year, *Forbes* ranked him as the best investment in the business, garnering more than fourteen dollars at the box office for every dollar he's paid.) But he would like to remind you, gently, that those same smarts compelled him to cold-shoulder most of the commercial films he was offered after *Swingers*. Instead he chose to appear in a succession of smaller, darker movies with forgotten titles. *A Cool, Dry Place* and *Clay Pigeons* and *Return to Paradise*. Reprising the character of Norman Bates in Gus Van Sant's remake of *Psycho* nearly buried Vaughn under a reputation for playing malcontents and killers. "When *Old School* came about," he says, "it was really very difficult for me to get a role in that movie, because no one saw me as a comic actor." Other happy, lucrative jaunts followed, and now few people—despite his memorable turn in *Into the Wild*—can see him as anything but. So when he talks about his documentary on the murals of Belfast, about death and beauty and art and bombs and what makes us the same and what makes us different, you almost expect him to say, "Just kidding," and drop his pants. Isn't this the guy who was paid $20 million to make *Fred Claus*?

Maybe Belfast grabbed such a strong hold on him because of his struggles to hold his own opposites together. Or maybe it's because he was raised in a divided city himself. Chicago. He's asked the question that all Chicago natives must answer in their hearts shortly after they take their first breath, coloring their fates and their futures for the rest of their lives. It's the question that answers every other question.

Cubs or White Sox?

"I root for both teams," Vaughn says.

You can't root for both teams.

"I really do."

No. You can't.

He looks genuinely perplexed.

'But ..."

No buts.

"I'm a Cubs fan," he says, finally and a little sadly, because that's a hard thing to admit. "As a kid, the Cubs were my team."

Now we're getting—

"That being said, when the White Sox won the World Series, I was rooting for them the whole way. I go to Comiskey Park, and I root for them against anyone in the American League and anyone in the National League except for the Cubs. And a lot of Sox fans don't respect that. And the same with Cubs fans. They think you have to root for one or the other."

They think that because you do.

"I've always rooted for both," he says, raising his hands, *I don't know what to tell you*. "Because I love Chicago most of all."

He sinks deeper into the couch, exhausted by his lies. Only seconds later, he pops back up, looking as though he realizes he's made a terrible mistake.

"I love Los Angeles, too," he says. "I don't own a house here right now. I own a place in Chicago. But I consider Los Angeles home as well—I moved here when I was eighteen years old, and this city's been very good to me. So many great neighborhoods. ... I might get a place here at some point. I spend a lot of time here, and I do like it. I like it a lot. I love it, actually. It's just that Chicago's where I'm from, you know what I mean? That's all it is."

It turns out, it's a lot of work being Vince Vaughn. There are a lot of plates to spin. Friends say that Vaughn is surprisingly political, routinely firing off opinionated riffs on world events. (Apparently his impassioned take on the Israeli–Palestinian conflict is like listening to Khrushchev banging his shoe on the podium.) But those are private sessions, his few remaining dramatic outlets. The public Vaughn, the professional Vaughn, is the man in the middle, afraid to give anyone a reason not to like him. "I'm not running for office," he says. "I just want people to come to my stuff and escape and see me as a character, not as anything else." Seeing him here just now, his legs stretched like bridges across to the coffee table, the light catching the worry lines and lumps on his face, you get the feeling that even in Belfast Vaughn would always find a way to be the black taxi.

McCain or Obama?

"Not a chance," Vaughn says, and he jumps out the window.

There is only one question that Vaughn will answer without reservation. He answered it the night before, at the steakhouse, underscoring every elaborately constructed sentence, paragraph, and punctuation mark with a forkful of lobster meat, flashing across the table like a rapier. It was as though Vince Vaughn from the movies suddenly showed up, goofy and motormouthed and frantic, a machine with its own built-in momentum.

What's funny?

"I think it's when you have an insight that people can relate to, but you have a perspective that maybe they haven't thought of—that can be funny. If I'm saying a universal truth, but maybe it's something that people don't feel comfortable saying. ... It's a strange take, but at the same time, what you're hitting on is kind of right. You can relate. That's the heart of comedy. You have to have a point of view. You gotta commit. And the more you commit to it, sometimes the funnier it gets. Like in *Mr and Mrs. Smith*, I'm convinced that something's going to go down."

Cubs or White Sox? "Both," Vaughn says. You can't root for both. "I do." No. You can't. He looks perplexed. "But..." No buts. "I'm a Cubs fan," he says, finally. Now we're getting—"That said, when the Sox won the Series, I was rooting for them the whole way."

Vaughn starts looking around the restaurant, jittery and bug-eyed, seeing imaginary vampire bats swooping down from the rafters.

"It's crazy, but the more I'm past questioning it, the funnier it is. Or in *Swingers*, I make such a big deal over how many days you have to wait before you call a girl. I think it's funny because I'm so particular, as though it really means the world to me. I have friends in real life, the way they see stuff, they can be so narrow in their perspective, it makes me laugh. You could have a friend who's dating someone and he can get hung up on the smallest thing. It's like ..."

And here Vaughn starts shouting, hitting the table, and the people in the restaurant who've been pretending not to look at him stop pretending.

"She wrote me an e-mail! At the end of that e-mail it says, dot dot dot. What does that mean? No, no seriously, if that was a period, that would be the end of the sentence. There's closure. Dot dot dot, there's no closure!"

He shrinks back down.

"It's that kind of commitment that makes it sort of funny. If I take an extreme, absolute position, that becomes funny. Because the reaction doesn't warrant the reality. It's just dot dot dot."

He swells up and starts shouting again.

"Dot dot dot? Who does she think she is? She's fronting on me! She thinks she's going to get one over on me? I'm going to call her sister. Because I'm not here to get played, dog."

COTTON SHIRT AND WOOL TIE: ERMENEGILDO ZEGNA. HAIR: JEFF PAIK.

Now with his hands up, in a calmer voice: "Slow down, man, it's just dot dot dot. It's just, like, to be continued.

"WHAT'S TO BE CONTINUED?!"

The timing, the delivery, the sheer size of his performance, they make the words so much funnier than they are—he's done what he has done so often before, taken mediocre material and given it a blast with cardiac paddles—and people in the restaurant are really laughing hard now, heads on their empty plates, tears in their eyes. Vaughn sits back, picks up his drink, surveys his audience, and he smiles that really nice smile of his. He's loving this. He's loving that we've fallen in love.

Favreau shows up and Vaughn makes room for him on the couch. He's just wearing a T-shirt and jeans, sucking on a mint for lunch, ready to go to work. It's funny seeing them like this, the two guys from *Swingers* at their ten-year reunion, a little older, a little fatter, a little tired-seeming and wrung out. Their lives have gone in different directions since then, in exactly the directions you might have expected watching them play themselves in that film. Favreau, at forty-two, is more serious-minded and restrained, with a house and a wife and three kids. Vaughn, now thirty-eight, is like that guy still sleeping on a water bed in the room above the garage. In their more honest moments, they probably look at each other and envy what the other has, but despite Vaughn's valiant stab at never being entirely one thing or the other, there are some parts of a man's life where you can't have it both ways. It's one or the other.

"We're like the Sunshine Boys,' Favreau says. "Did you ever see that? He's Walter Matthau.'

Favreau looks at Vaughn. "Or maybe you're George Burns."

"Jon's my favorite writer," Vaughn says. "Even collaborating now with *Couples Retreat*, my job is just to help shape it. He's really the guy writing it."

"But Vince was smart enough to say, Hey, I'm at this point in my career, instead of just fielding gigs, let me generate my own material. It was about a year and a half ago, after the Spike Awards—"

"The Mantlers,' Vaughn says.

"We won this award—"

"The Golden Mantlers."

"We were inducted into the Guys Hall of Fame. So we went to the Dresden of all places, where we hadn't been in years, and Vince laid out what he was going to do with Wild West and some of the ideas he wanted to pursue. He mentioned *Couples Retreat*. And I have a perspective on that, being married with three kids. . . ."

"Are you done having kids?" Vaughn asks.

"Yeah, I'm done."

"You're not going to pull the goalie ever again?"

"No. Joy says, 'It's wife number two if you want more kids.'"

"Then you would have to move to, like, some Islamic country where you could have another wife," Vaughn says.

"Or nowhere. I could do the Hollywood thing just hit reset."

"Or you could move into Warren Jeffs territory."

"I could set up a compound?"

"Yeah," Vaughn says, "a compound. That was so disturbing. You see all these little girls who look like extras from *Little House on the Prairie*. It's like Half Pint's been putting out for everybody. . . ."

"Polygamy seems appealing," Favreau says, "but then I've been watching that show *Big Love*, and you realize it's the same headaches."

"It's triple the headaches. Triple the nagging. Triple the question, *What are you thinking?*"

"Yeah, one marriage is enough," Favreau says.

"You have to pick out three sets of blinds.'

"Anyway,' Favreau says, "I'm in that place, coming from that perspective now. I couldn't write something like *Swingers* today, because I'm so far out of that."

"No, you have a good imagination," Vaughn says.

"No, *Swingers*, a lot of that stuff was stuff you'd said or stuff I'd heard about, and it gives you a personal take on the stuff. When I write, I need that."

"It blows my mind, seeing where Favs has gone with his career," Vaughn says. "I mean, *Iron Man*? Are you kidding? That's incredible to me, thinking about us not that long ago, sitting at the diner, trying to figure out how to get the money to make *Swingers*."

"Now that we both can make movies more easily," Favreau says, "the hard part is, What movies do I want to make? What means something to me? The challenges have changed. It's a lot different for us now. It's like being a short-order cook instead of being a chef, when you could pay such close attention to every part of the process. How do you bring that same quality when people are lined up around the block waiting for you to serve something up?"

"That's well said," Vaughn says.

'Before, we had all the time in the world. . . .'

And as Favreau continues to talk—Jon Favreau is smart as hell, by the way; he should charge admission to watch him change a diaper—Vaughn continues to listen. Not just casually. He's really listening, as though someone's grabbed him by the shoulders.

". . . it's important to remind each other who we are and what we like. . . ."

Vaughn, who's hardly ever quiet, stays quiet, and a look crosses his face. It's not wonder. It's more like revelation.

Favreau keeps talking: ". . . you're either selling or you're buying. . . ."

And Vaughn keeps listening, because now it feels as though Favreau is talking directly to him, as though there is nobody else in the room. Here are two friends, magnetic poles, sitting on opposite ends of the same couch, the one who's grown up and the one who's refused to settle down, the one who takes risks—because *Iron Man* could have destroyed Jon Favreau, that could have been the end of him right there—and the one who returns to the same well, the one who commits and the one who lies awake at night worried that someone might think ill of him. While their world is easier now than ever in some ways, it's harder, too. Sometimes they must feel split in two. Vince Vaughn has money, he has fame, he has power. He has the love he's always gone after. But what's he going to do with it?

". . . that ray of clarity. . . ."

And just then, Vince Vaughn looks the way a big man looks when someone stands up to him for the first time in his life. He looks like a man who knows that he can cover only so much ground, that even giants have their limits. He looks like a man who knows he will have to pick a side. He looks suddenly smaller. He still looks a lot like Vince Vaughn, only built to scale. ■

"It blows my mind, seeing where Favs has gone," Vaughn says. "I mean, *Iron Man*? Are you kidding? That's incredible to me, thinking about us not that long ago, figuring out how to get the money to make *Swingers*."



SCENES FROM MOVIES NOT YET MADE

THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS A NEW STORY — THERE ARE ONLY STORIES THAT HAVE YET TO BE TOLD

Starring Best & Brightest actor Michael Sheen* in seven fictional roles of his own creation.

Stories and stage directions by Best & Brightest writer BEAU WILLIMON*

Soundtrack by POP LEVI, WHITE DENIM, BLITZEN TRAPPER, OREN LAVIE, MUGISON, EL TEN ELEVEN, GENTLEMAN REG, CHARLIE MARS, and LONGWAVE.

Wardrobe by Prada, Louis Vuitton, Cole Haan, Ralph Lauren, Versace, Calvin Klein, Giorgio Armani, Dolce & Gabbana, Burberry, Etro, and Tod's.

Photographs by MATT JONES

*For more on these Best & Brightest subjects, turn to pages 167 and 185.
To listen to the soundtrack, visit esquire.com/scenes-from-movies.



From the film *The Dreamlife of*

IST. A PARISIAN HOTEL ROOM, MORNING

Pewter light seeps past the curtains, blanketing a chaise longue and boxy television from another era. Our hero (and villain) SALVADOR, meticulously straightens the double-Windsor knot of his tie. Eureka! An idea for a new masterpiece has just struck! His waxed mustachio points toward the heavens, where visions of sagging clocks mingle with Technicolor butterflies. SALVADOR must dash to the studio before his vision melts away.

Pop Levi, *"Wannamama"*

Two-button wool suit ($1,550) and cotton shirt ($415) by Prada; silk tie ($195) by Louis Vuitton; leather shoes ($470) by Cole Haan.

Right: Two-button wool suit ($1,995) and cotton shirt ($295) by Ralph Lauren Black Label; silk tie ($75) Polo by Ralph Lauren; leather shoes ($475) by Cole Haan.

Left: Cotton shirt ($395) and silk tie ($125) by Versace.

< From the film *Running Mad* INT. TEE SAFE HOUSE, DAY

Three loud raps on the door. The MAN ON THE RUN wheels around in his chair. Can he make a dash for it? Where can he go? Has he finally been caught?

White Denim
Shake Shake Shake



< INT. TEE SAFE HOUSE, DAY (cont'd)

There's not a second to spare. He whips off his jacket and sets it ablaze with a cigarette lighter, then tosses it on the bed, which instantly bursts into flames. The billowing smoke will buy him some time and veil him from his pursuers. OFFSCREEN we hear the door get busted down. Shouts. Rasping coughs. The MAN ON THE RUN takes one last look in the mirror before throwing himself out the window. Better to take his chances with fate than be captured. It's only twenty feet to the street below—maybe he can escape one last time.

Blitzen Trapper,
Fire & Fast Bullets

< From the film The Razor's Touch

INT. MASTER BATH, THE TWILIGHT HOUR

CLOSE-UP of eccentric real estate mogul THEODORE KILLIAN leering at his listless trophy wife, who is lounging in a suds-filled tub OFFSCREEN. His gaze is as sharp as the straight razor he's using to shave away his five-o'clock shadow. Years of indifference have cooled whatever passion the two once shared. Now that indifference has soured into disgust. KILLIAN hasn't told his wife yet, but after they attend the opera tonight, she will never see him again.

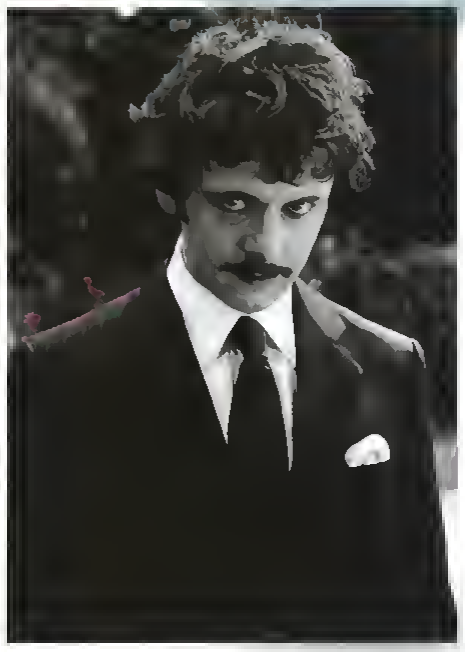
Two button wool suit ($1,395) cotton shirt ($225) and silk tie ($100) by Calvin Klein Collection

Orent Lavie, *"Locked in a Room"*

Two button wool suit ($4,525) cotton shirt ($395) silk tie ($125) and silk pocket square ($195) by Giorgio Armani

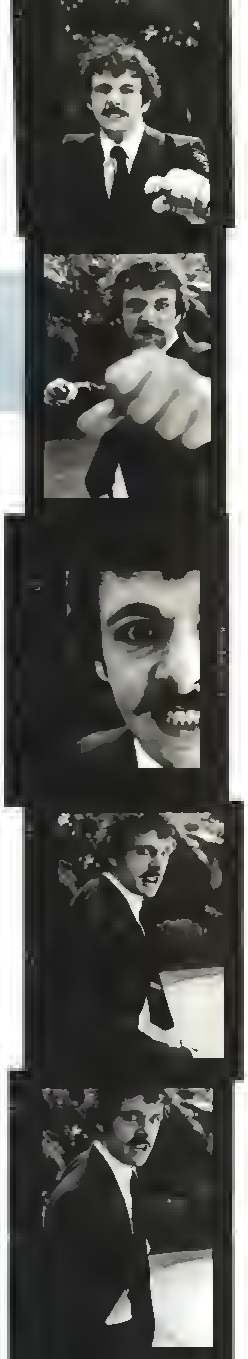
From the film Fallen Giants

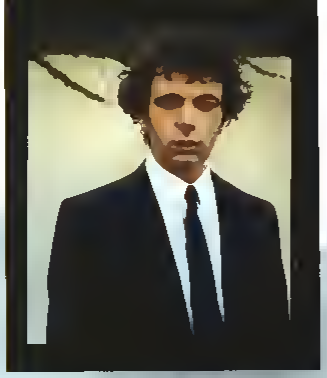
EXT. CITY HALL PARK, DAY



Head hung low, DRESNER exits city hall, crushingly aware that he must now resign. Out of the corner of his eye, he spots LAROCHE—the muckraking reporter who brought about his downfall. DRESNER makes a beeline for the newspaperman, cornering him between a wrought-iron gate and a towering hedge. The full wrath and venom of DRESNER'S rage is now unleashed If he must go down, LAROCHE is going down with him.

Mugison, *"Two Thumb Sucking Son of a Bore"*





From the film *Proteus*

EXT. CHICAGO, DESERTED CITY STREET, DAY

Watching with horror as the robbery unfolds across the street, LUKE knows he must act. Now is finally the time to put his shape-shifting power to good use. Clenching his fists, LUKE turns all his energy inward. Before our eyes, his face begins to tremble, then to blur, transforming into something we know not. At last he is no longer a mere man—he is now the most elusive of superheroes, the hero of a thousand forms. He is PROTEUS.

El Ten Eleven, *"Adam and Nathan Totally Kicking Ass"*



Left: Two-but ton wool suit ($1,595) cotton shirt ($425) and silk tie ($175) by Dolce & Gabbana.

Right: Two-but ton wool suit ($1 495) cotton shirt ($225) and silk tie ($165) by Burberry London.

From the film *A Merry Affair* **EXT. THE MANSE, POOLSIDE, DUSK**

The party has drawn to a close. ELLIOT—weary from empty small talk and a sea of fake smiles—is now alone. Melancholy sets in. He slips off his loafers, walks the length of the diving board as though it were a ship's plank, and takes a seat. His bare feet dangle just above the glasslike water. As ELLIOT stares down at his own reflection, the sparkle that once glittered in his eyes is nowhere to be seen. He wonders what his future holds in store.

Gentleman Reg *"We're in a Thunderstorm"*



FOR STORE INFORMATION SEE PAGE 194.
HAIR BY PATRICIA MORALES. MAKEUP BY KIKI RENEE. ADDITIONAL STYLING BY ARIANNE TUNNEY. ALL FOR TRACEY MATTINGLY. LOCATION COORDINATION BY EMILY ROTH FOR PRODUCIT.

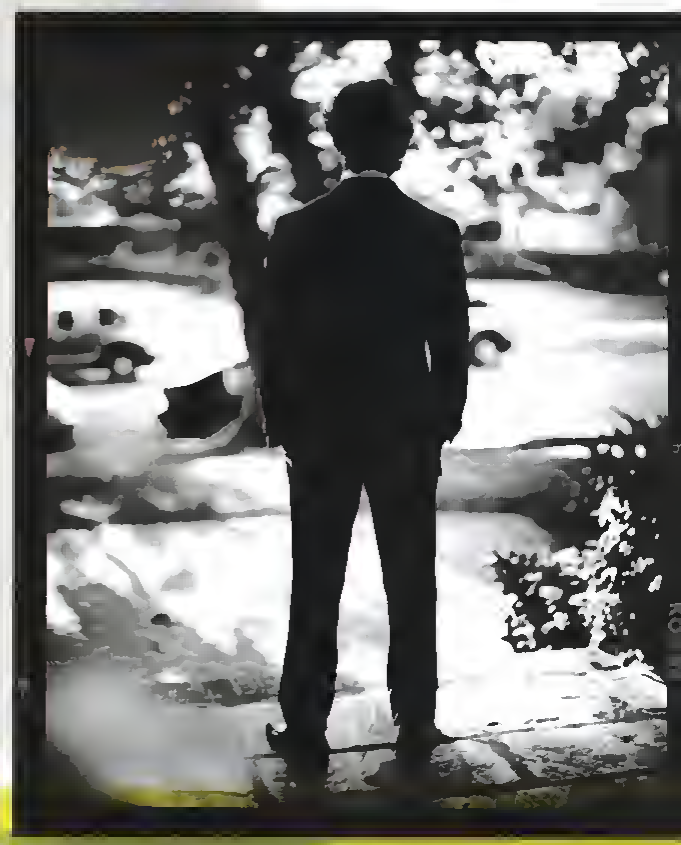
< From the film *One More Summer*

EXT. LONDON, KENSINGTON GARDENS, DAY

A rare shaft of bright afternoon sun dapples a canopy of leaves with its warmth. CALLUM paces to and fro, hands stuffed in his pockets, wondering if she'll show. Suddenly he hears a familiar voice call his name. He halts, throwing a sidelong glance at the beautiful woman sashaying toward him. We can't see her, but from the smile beginning to wash across CALLUM'S lips, we know it's the woman he's been waiting for his entire life. Everything will be different this time.

This page and opposite: Two button wool suit ($1,680) and cotton shirt ($375) by Etro. Silk tie ($115). Polo by Ralph Lauren. Leather shoes ($495) by Tod's.

CHarlie Mars, *Meet Me by the Back Door*"



EXT. LONDON, KENSINGTON GARDENS, DAY (cont'd)

She's engaged to someone else. How could he have known? CALLUM turns away, unable to look at her. We hear her crying softly OFFSCREEN, but CALLUM remains still as a statue, the full weight of his shattered hopes sinking in. And yet it's not despair we sense in his broad shoulders but strength and courage. Nothing will stop him now. He will undo the damage that's been done. He will rekindle their love. He will win her back—whatever it takes. ■

Longwave, *"Secrets Are Sinister"*



sweeter

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Best and Brightest 2008

POLITICS | CULTURE | SCIENCE | TECHNOLOGY

The world looks troubled. And yet there are reasons for hope. A new president. A new century. A new start. And these two dozen dreamers. They are making water from air and oil from algae. They are using mosquitoes to prevent disease, cell phones to cure poverty. And their buildings and novels and maps and even hearts—reiggered, rebuilt, reborn—are unlike anything you have ever seen. Radical and beautiful monuments to everything right and inspiring about American innovation.

Burying Frank Gehry

Joshua Prince-Ramus is waging a holy war against the sculptors, starchitects, and fey theoreticians of his profession. And in the process, he's actually building things

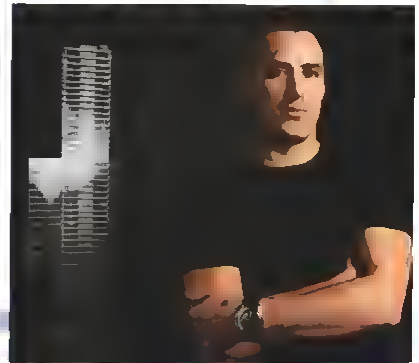
By SCOTT RAAB

The Seattle Central Library "The whole skin of that project was designed to keep that building standing, and to build the building for a low cost. It was great engineering. It's not about making a beautiful skin. It just so happened to make a beautiful skin. It's a beautiful piece of engineering; it should not belong on the cover of an architectural-theory book about the autonomous language of architecture and the evolution of the skin. That has nothing to do with it."

The written history of Western architecture dates back more than two thousand years, to Vitruvius Pollio's *De Architectura*, architects have spent the past millennium debating whether his three fundamental goals should be properly understood to mean "commodity, firmness, and delight" or "durability, convenience, and beauty"—mainly because architects love nothing more than arguing about theory and the varieties of architectural experience.

Meanwhile, they studiously ignore Vitruvius's groveling preface, wherein he fellates his client—some emperor named Caesar—for everything from his "divine intelligence and will" to the "splendid achievement" of subjugating much of the world, by way of unintentionally illustrating the most vital tenet of architecture: *No client—no work.*

Joshua Prince-Ramus can lecture for hours about making great and essential architecture by serving a client's needs first—



and he often does, trying to right the wrongs done by the squishy theorists and squiggly scripting programs of academia.

"All the great architects—every one of them—says, 'It *represents*.' I say to students, 'Don't you think it would be great if architecture just started *doing* again? Why are we *representing*? Do—it's much more powerful. I've never seen a client give a shit about my personal vision. I had to figure out how to piggyback what my vision was onto *their* issues. I've never been comfortable"—he grabs a sheet of white paper, uncaps his pen, and starts whorling in black ink—"doing Frank Gehry. I would never suppose that someone would look at my sketch and go, *Aaahhhhhhhhh*. No wonder architecture's dead—because that's what everyone thinks architecture is now. When Calatrava and Gehry die, it's done—no one's gonna pay us to do that. So it's terrifying for me to look at schools trying to *bring out your personal vision*."

> "I'VE NEVER BEEN COMFORTABLE DOING FRANK GEHRY. I WOULD NEVER SUPPOSE THAT SOMEONE WOULD LOOK AT MY SKETCH AND GO, *AAAHHHHHH*. NO WONDER ARCHITECTURE'S DEAD."

His voice rises, wobbling with passionate disdain. At thirty-nine, working in a craft whose stars are two or three decades older, Prince-Ramus is a formidable embodiment of cool intellectual rigor—he majored in philosophy at Yale and received his Master in Architecture degree from Harvard—and hard-nosed ambition, Hegel in tight jeans and a black T-shirt, with a vintage Italian diver's watch and a tattooed line from e. e. cummings—"always the beautiful answer who asks a more beautiful question"—snaking up one arm.

"Starting in the 1920s, the modernist agenda made a schism between form and function. Terrible idea—*terrible* for architecture. They sided with functionalism; they failed. Architects in their infinite wisdom didn't stitch them back together, we went all the way the other way, to formalism. And now we're at the height of a formalist agenda—total failure, terrible idea.

"You need to heal two things as an architect. You need to heal form and function. It's a useless, irrelevant distinction. Form *performs*, function *performs*—forget about it. And you need to heal the whole concept of the design architect"—the sketching artiste—"and the executive architect. It's a totally unproductive distinction. You can't design without knowing schedules and contracts. You can't do schedules and contracts without knowing how to design."

In fact, Prince-Ramus sees designing contracts as a quintessential aspect of the process of designing and building buildings.

"If you can't design a great contract, it doesn't matter how good an idea you have—you won't build it. It's as simple as that. With this other schism, architects started to act more and more like artists—and to treat the business as beneath them. And I find that absolutely absurd. No wonder we're so impotent."

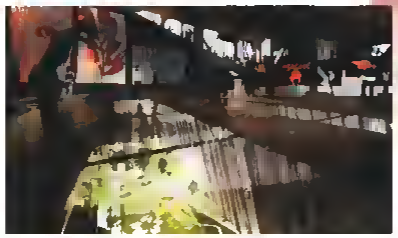
PRINCE-RAMUS'S MISSION:

> **"We very much** care about form and aesthetics, but we see them more as a component of a solution, not as the solution. The vision is about reinventing something. When we do a library, we want to make sure it redefines what a library is. When we do a contemporary art institute in the middle of a for-profit development, we want to do great architecture within the constraints of for-profit development.

"In a meeting with the client in Louisville, they said, 'Wait—so what you're saying is, a kid in a bathing suit will come down from the luxury condo and have to walk through the public space to get to the swimming pool next to people in black-tie going to see the opening of the de Kooning show? And we're like, *Yesssss!* Isn't that exciting?"

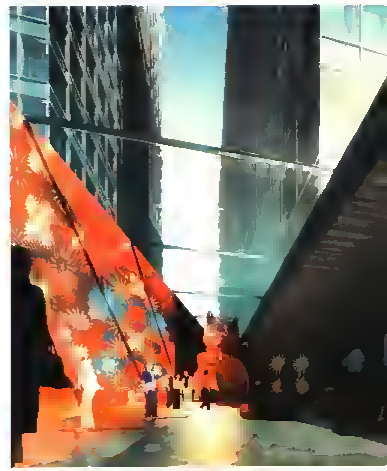
MUSEUM PLAZA, LOUISVILLE

A sixty two-story mixed use complex—hotel, commercial, office, and residential towers, and contemporary art museum (the broad center of the buildings, floors twenty-four through twenty-six), with views looking up between the towers and down twenty-four stories to a park. Broke ground in October 2007, to be completed in 2011.



The problem: "It sits on the wrong side of a thirty-foot-high concrete floodwall. The Ohio River floods into the zone sometimes as much as twenty feet, two or three times a year. That's one shitty location. Put a contemporary art museum into the middle of a floodplain, as well as retail that can't be seen because it's on the wrong side of the floodwall—it was a nonstarter."





The solution: "Pick the whole thing up, spin two of the towers underneath, reposition these to improve the views and the relationships, and then make circulation connections to it. That building is not the way it is just because someone wanted to make a profit—it's that way because someone wanted to reinvent a contemporary art institute.

"Forget our ambitions about culture—this is the vehicle that we had to design, as architects, to understand development, to give a solution that would make the thing pencil out so we could earn the right to do something amazing with contemporary art. That thing is a machine; it's a tool, a development tool. It's architecture solving a development problem. You never would think of doing it—it's too weird. But it makes something really remarkable."

Working with his colleagues at Rex, the New York City studio he runs, with architects based in the places where the projects are built, and with a consortium of engineers and consultants—as with the "genius sketch," Prince-Ramus derides the prevailing concept of authorship in architecture. "Author a *process*, if you author a process you actually are losing control, you don't know what's gonna evolve"—he'll often take months to research and workshop a design.

"To go through this thinking process, to work with our clients, accepting constraints—'What are your problems?'—making constraints the opportunities, we set up the rules. Our agenda is maximizing the client's agenda—to design a process that will lead to a conclusion. No *willful* design—it's just problem solving. What you know is that you're going to go to first principles, challenge convention, and if you *really* stick to that, something will come out that you simply can't imagine, something that will transcend what any individual could sketch. It allows more voices and tangents—it allows the thing to go through an evolution, to arrive at something that transcends what any of us could have imagined at first. The thing designs itself.

"We don't care who authors something—if it's the most senior person on our team, a student who just came that morning, or the janitor. We don't care where the idea comes from. The ideas get torn apart, and the more interesting an idea is, the more aggressive the tearing apart gets. Authoring a process is much more successful than authoring an object—regardless of the project. If you look at our work, you'll see an underlying current of thought, not an underlying current of architectural solutions."

Ask Prince-Ramus to define his own aesthetic and he growls. Literally.

"Dumb. If it ain't dumb, don't do it."

Having thus resolved the thousand-year debate, architecture's anti-star heads over to a diner down the block, to deconstruct a Reuben sandwich.

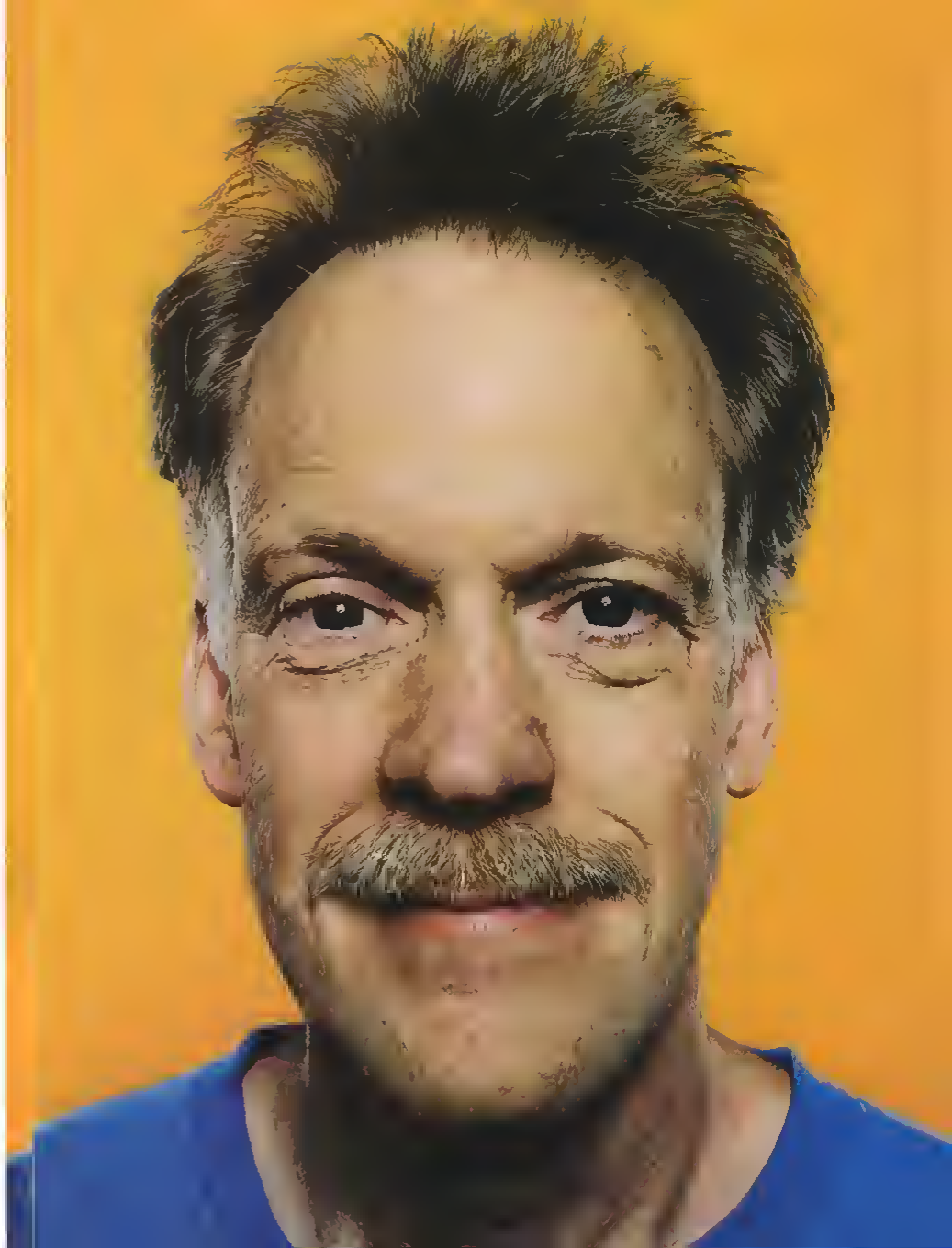
"Every Monday," he says, "it gets my week off right."

Bubbling cauldrons, toxic substances, insane and dangerous ideas—whatever happened to that kind of science? Take a look at Mark Roth in his lab in Seattle. It's mad. It's heroic. It's...

SCIENCE THE WAY IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE

By TOM JUNOD

Photographs by John Clark





Geeking 101 Roth's serum will render an animal—a mouse, say—dead to all appearances. And hours, or a day later, he can bring it back.

here are things you should know about, just because they're weird. Did you know that people with diabetes exhale rocket fuel? It's true, but it's *weird*, right? And spontaneous combustion. That's true, too, apparently, albeit in a bigfoot sort of way. People just explode. Mark Roth keeps a file on them, because—well, for one thing, he's interested in the genetics of spontaneous combustion, and, for another, he's interested in what *keeps* people from exploding, like, all the time. I mean, why shouldn't they? People never ask *that*. But then they never ask a lot of things. Human beings are 37 degrees Celsius. That's pretty much the standard. But why? Nobody ever tells you. You can read a thousand books on bioenergetics and they won't even ask the question. So it's *unexplained*, and that's when you can learn things. You can learn things when things are unexplained—when the sword is still in the stone. Take movement, for example. We humans are absolutely programmed to be interested in movement. In fact, if you're a biologist, you're really a movementologist; you study that which moves. You're a slave to the animate. Which, of course, is how Mark Roth got the idea that *deanimation* really might be the better scene, and found himself in *Ripley's Believe It or Not!*

Now, Mark Roth is a scientist. He's not a philosopher or a crank. He proves things, experimentally, according to the scientific method. In 2007, he got a MacArthur, so he's a genius, certified. He's got this long, narrow orsacular head, shaped like a Corinthian column, expanding as it gets to the gray matter. He's got a flexible nose. 1 or 2 degrees off center. He's got kind, tired eyes—Vonnegutian eyes—to which his eyebrows, scroll-shaped, offer fancy punctuation. He's got a ginger-colored mustache and ginger-colored hair going gray, now that he's pushed into his fifties. He's got long, skinny arms that he waves around, and long, skinny legs covered with ginger-colored freckles that are available to view because he used to be a runner for the University of Oregon and still wears shorts to work, and blue Converse sneakers, and white socks bright with elastic. He sometimes gives you a goofy double thumbs-up when he thinks he's proved his point, when he's proved that what he's talking about—be it ball lightning or the philosopher's stone—is not a crazy idea but rather a gomer. Still, he's got a lot of ideas, for a scientist, and some of them come from unusual sources, like tabloid news reports and science fiction.

It's a weird thing about scientists—you would think that they would love science fiction. But they don't. To admit that you get your ideas from science fiction, if you're a scientist, that's, like, *career-threatening*, man, just like it might be professionally risky to say you work in Mark Roth's lab, no matter how outlandish and game-changing its accomplishments. And so, yes, Mark Roth is a scientist. But he's a scientist in the way that you used to want to be a scientist when you were a kid, with weird substances—dangerous substances, toxic substances, indeed the most toxic substances known to man!—bubbling away in his lab, rather than a scientist in the way that most scientists are scientists, with NIH funding, a stack of grant applications to catch up on, and a commitment to pursue the one or two ideas that got them that precious federal funding to *the death*. And so last year, when one of his nephews was in a store in South Carolina and his mother—Roth's sister—came by to get him, when the boy wouldn't move because he was so engrossed in the latest edition of *Ripley's Believe It or Not!* and his mother finally had to yell at him... when the boy trudged dutifully out to the car and, when they were on the road, finally told his mother that she should have let him keep reading that book because *Uncle Mark's in it*—well, Uncle Mark wasn't exactly displeased when his sister called him later that night to tell him that he'd made *Ripley's*. He'd had papers published in *Science*, he'd had papers published in *Nature*, he'd had papers published in the most prestigious scientific and medical journals in the world, but *Ripley's Believe It or Not!*, for his work making *suspended animation* possible in human beings? He made *Ripley's*? That was cool, man. That was an honor. *That* was science.

The funny thing is, suspended animation wasn't even the weirdest idea he had when he made his decision to stop being a reductionist—which is not only what most scientists are but also what the NIH pays them to be—and start becoming an expansionist. And it was definitely a decision, a moment of desperate clarity. See, he'd done his share of bricklaying. He'd done his share of saying, *This is the protein, this is the gene*—you know, sitting around the campfire, warming his hands with the other scientists. Indeed, he'd had enough success with RNA splicing at the Carnegie Institution in Baltimore to know two things. First, that some scientists weren't necessarily happy that he'd had success with RNA splicing; and, second, that the same scientists who weren't necessarily happy that he'd had success with RNA splicing wanted him to do RNA splicing for the rest of his natural life. Talk about weird... but that's not what convinced him to leave the campfire. No, what convinced him that he had to start going out into the woods and fetch his ideas from the darkness was... the darkness itself.

In 1995, Roth's wife, Laurie, gave birth to his second daughter, Hannah. She was born with Down syndrome and a heart with one ventricle. Mark Roth was thirty-eight years old. He was... by this time, a researcher at Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center in Seattle... and if his daughter survived, he was looking at having a dependent for as long as he was alive. He met with Laurie and told her: Hey, whatever happens, life as we know it is over. This being an academic: this bricklaying, this grant-seeking, this paper-publishing, this encoding of proteins, this scientific nut-gathering, this career of increments, this life of the most punishing and irrevocable *patience*—well, it's not going to cut it. The obligation of Hannah had liberated him to seek the scientist in himself, and the scientist in himself wanted nothing less than to change the world—to pursue science for the sake of human benefit, not in the long term, but right here, right now, while Mark Roth was still in his breathing period, whether he knew the molecular basis of the benefit or not.

And then Hannah died. She died after heart surgery. She was just over a year old.

And then Mark Roth began to fail. Like, unequivocally. He was still doing experiments, he was still doing science... but it was as if he were experimenting with failure itself. He was committed to it. He didn't think there was enough of it. He was going to see where failure took him.

The first failure? Immortality. He'd gotten interested in the possibility of immortality. You know. It's not like we don't know the secret of immortality. We do. We know where it is, anyway. It's in the gonads. I mean, you have a child, you become immortal—humans know that, in the same way that fruit flies know that. It's intrinsic knowledge, evolutionary knowledge. But what most people don't know is that we can sort of *see* immortality under an electron microscope. The immortal cells that are found in the gonads are called germ cells, and what makes them different from all the other cells in the body is that they're lumpy. They've got these lumps inside them called P granules, so that's where the secret of immortality has to be—in the lumps. So Mark Roth got very interested in the lumps. But he wasn't the only one. He was racing to identify one of the lump proteins. And he lost. He lost to Susan Strome, a scientist now at UC Santa Cruz. And there was no second prize. Science is like *Glengarry Glen Ross* that way. First prize is the Cadillac, second prize is you don't get funding. Second prize is you have to figure out what to do next.

What Roth figured out to do next was to fail again—to fail again while making good on his promise to create something of immediate benefit to human beings. See, it's notoriously hard to diagnose the autoimmune disease lupus. But back when he was doing RNA splicing, Roth had figured out a way to do it, and now he set about trying not only to develop the test but to take it to market—himself. And he did it. For three years, that's all he did, nonstop. He developed the test, got the patent, and then went out and got FDA approval for what he had created. He was, as far as he knows, the first scientist ever to get FDA approval for a diagnostic test all by himself, without the help of a corporation, in an academic setting. Now he had just what he wanted—something that solved a problem, something that actually helped people.

You know how many people it helped? Roth makes a steering wheel with his arms to show how many people it helped. It helped nobody. It was a big zero. Not because it didn't work, rather, because there was no market for it. Or because there was a market for it, but it wasn't big enough to convince any pharmaceutical company to manufacture and distribute it. A test that helped solve the age-old problem of diagnosing lupus? Roth couldn't give it away. He still gets e-mails from people who think that they might have lupus, or that their kids might have lupus, and who want his test. And he has to answer that his test does not exist.

> WHAT DOES ROTH DO? HE DEANIMATES AND THEN HE REANIMATES. HE TAKES AWAY LIFE AND THEN HE GIVES IT BACK.

So there he was, Mark Roth, at the turn of the century, not just an unfunded scientist at Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center but a *legendarily* unfunded one—the king of interim funding, who told colleagues that he wanted to be the guy who changed medical science forever, and then, in the next breath, told them all about spontaneous combustion. Or suspended animation. Brilliant guy, Mark—but people actually laughed at him, with his weird ideas. And yet he learned something from his failures, and what he learned was not that he was too weird; it was that he wasn't weird enough. His thinking was too small. If you want to change

the world, you've got to change your thinking first. And the only way to do that is to take refuge in the unexplained—in the places where the sword is still in the stone. He had a notebook to that effect. Filled with unexplained phenomena and sci-fi gleanings, and he would page through it to figure out the weird idea he could turn into the big idea. He was a little like Goldilocks at this point: This one's too far out there, this one's not far out enough. He was looking for the one that was *just right* when he started going through the file he'd kept of people who have survived hypothermia. Skiers in Switzerland, lost in avalanches. Drunks in Chicago who fell asleep in the dead of winter—for all intents and purposes, they were *dead*, except that they weren't except that they could be revived, hardly the worse for wear. Weird, right? *Suspended animation*. And that's the game.

See, it wasn't like Roth ever let go of the dream of immortality. He was still obsessed with the lumps. He just began thinking about them in a different way. Okay, the lumps are immortal—so what do they do, how do they achieve that end? And here's the answer: They do nothing. They're quiescent. They're couch potatoes! They're immortal, because for all intents and purposes—in terms of *movement*—they're already dead! And maybe that's what immortality is. People always think of it in terms of living forever. But maybe it just means not dying—not dying when you're supposed to die, surviving the mortal moments. We don't know what life is, anyway. Not really. We just know what life *does*—it burns oxygen. It's a process of combustion. We're all just slow-burning candles, making our way through our allotment of precious O_2, until it becomes our toxin, until we burn out. Until we get old and die. But we *live* on 21 percent oxygen, just as we live at 37 degrees. They're related. Decrease the oxygen in 5 percent, we die. But look, the concentration of oxygen in the blood that runs through our capillaries is only 2 or 3 percent. We're almost dead already! So what if we turn down the candle's need for oxygen? What if we dim the candle so much that we don't even have the energy to *die*?

And so began Mark Roth's career as a deanimator. As a gorker. Gorking is—well, gorking. You take away some creature's supply of oxygen, you're gorking it, man. The trick, of course, is bringing it back. In the beginning, that wasn't so easy because in the beginning Roth was just free-associating. He was using heavy water, rat poison, and he was a *deanimator* without being a reanimator. Other scientists were laughing at him. Hey, Roth, did you *suspend* anything today? But then he did. He gorked some nematodes—roundworms—with nitrogen. An inert gas, sure, but it crowded out the oxygen available to them, it diminished the atmosphere. Roth took them to the Death Hole, which was an atmosphere of less than 1 percent oxygen. They died. But then he took them beyond the Death Hole, and they came back when oxygen was reintroduced. There was life beyond the Death Hole! So he tried carbon monoxide. Talk about gorking: Colorless, odorless, the agent of choice for many of the world's yearly cull of suicides, CO is Thanatos in a bottle—but it didn't kill the worms. It just dimmed the candle, not by taking away the supply of oxygen but rather by preventing the worms from using it. And that was the leap that Roth made—employing toxins for benefit. Using one of the most toxic substances known to man to interfere with the toxic effects of oxygen. See, when creatures die of hypoxia, they don't die because they don't have enough oxygen, they die because they're still burning the oxygen they don't have enough of. What Roth did was find a way to turn off—or turn down—the fire. What he did was find a way to separate the living cell not from oxygen itself but from the capacity to use it.

Still, that was worms, and he was looking for human benefit. It wasn't as if he was ever going to convince any sane human being of the benefit of carbon monoxide. So one night in 2002, he was watching TV, thinking of what he usually thought of—what kind of toxins he might be able to use to stop mammals from burning oxygen. He was watching *Nova*. It had a feature on these caves in Mexico that exhaled great lungfuls of hydrogen sulfide, an egg-smelling gas more toxic than carbon monoxide by a factor of ten. Nothing should live in those caves. Instead, the caves were full of all sorts of fascinating creatures that tempted spelunkers to go down to see them. And the spelunkers had to be really, really, really careful or else they'd get gorked. They had to wear all sorts of special gear or else they'd get gorked with one breath of hydrogen sulfide. Deanimated with a single breath! Roth didn't sleep for three days. He ran around telling anyone who would listen about hydrogen sulfide, and plenty of people—his neighbors mostly—who wouldn't. And by the time he stopped burning, he had figured out not only the utility of hydrogen sulfide as a beneficial toxin but also as a kind of metaphysics, based on the duality of oxygen and sulfur. Did you know that the existence of DNA—life—predated the existence of oxygen? Did you know that the earliest life existed not by breathing oxygen but rather by eating rocks? Did you know that the rocks were sulfur? Did you know that we're descended from those rock-eating microbes? Did you know that our bodies make hydrogen sulfide? Did you know that our bodies probably use hydrogen sulfide to keep from burning up on oxygen? Did you know that sulfur was also called brimstone? That before Jesus was raised from the dead, he went into a cave?

> IN ORDER TO PROVE HIS THEORY, HE NEEDED SOMETHING HE NEEDED (IN THE YEAR FOLLOWING 9/11) TO BUY LARGE QUANTITIES OF POISON GAS.

Of course. Roth was still unfunded. He was still a failed and unfunded researcher who was now seeking to buy large quantities of poison gas in the year following 9/11. He didn't go to the NIH for it, that's for sure. He went to Mark Groudine, the head of his department at Fred Hutchinson. He asked Mark G. for the $20,000 that would enable him to buy a few tanks of hydrogen sulfide and the equipment that would allow him to measure the responses of the mice he intended to gork. Mark G. worked right next to Mark R. and had been listening to two or three ideas a day from Mark R. for years. He gave him the money. Roth gorked the mice.

Roth's lab started gorking everything in sight: yeast, nematodes, mice, rats, dogs, pigs—but it was the paper Roth published the previous year on zebra-fish embryos that would finally get him federal money. Not from NIH, though. The zebra-fish paper was about stopping the heart of zebra-fish embryos. It was about switching their hearts on and off. The paper reported that the Roth lab was able to switch off the zebra-fish hearts for like nine hours before switching them back on again. I mean, those fish were dead. And



so one day in 2001 Roth got a call in his lab It was from DARPA That's the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency That's the Pentagon's arm for applied scientific research and "high risk, high payoff" freethinking It's a strange, oxymoronic place that, aside from the creative lethality of its intentions, might be Mark Roth's institutional counterpart. "Did you really do what you say you did?" the DARPA program manager asked Roth When Roth assured him that yes, he did, and that what he was doing was trying to get people not to die when they have heart attacks the DARPA guy said, Well, we're trying to get people not to die when they bleed out, and he started working on getting Roth paid

Roth never did get NIH money, though Well, he had some, for some bricklaying work he was doing on chromosomal separation But when he published his first paper on suspended animation and thanked the NIH for its support the NIH freaked What's suspended animation, after all when you could be putting federal money into advancing our knowledge of chromosomal separation? But he never really was an NIH guy anyway, because he was never really interested in the *mechanism* of suspended animation—he was interested in the *effect* He was interested in the benefit. There are people in his lab who are, at this moment, trying to account for the genetics of suspended animation and the role of hydrogen sulfide in the maintenance of metabolic flexibility, but Roth is a pragmatist. It sounds funny, calling a guy who says that he's interested in exploring the genetics of spontaneous combustion a pragmatist but Roth grew up poor outside Philadelphia After their father died, he and his brothers grew up in a boys' school that doubled as an orphanage, and though you lose some things when you get sent away from home at age seven—you lose love—you do become pragmatic and self-sufficient. Which is why once Roth deduced that there was the possibility that his use of hydrogen sulfide to dim the candle could change the standard of critical care not just in warfare but in hospitals around the world, he founded a biotech company in 2005 to market it.

It's called Ikaria, after the island with regenerative sulfur springs mentioned by Herodotus. We're not talking about a company that might market, say a diagnostic test for lupus here, we're talking about a company whose scientific mission is ruthlessly subordinated to the values of human benefit and scalability, we're talking about a biotechnology firm that, although started with venture capital, wound up purchasing a company that deals in pharmaceutical gases, such as the nitric oxide used to save the lives of blue babies, we're talking about a company with revenues of $200 million a year a company that, until the collapse of the financial markets, was expected to go public with one of the biggest biotech IPOs ever.

Mark Roth is a major stockholder He has always considered himself more of a throwback—a throwback to the days before basic science meant the ferreting out of molecular mechanisms. Now he wants to be a throwback to the days when scientists were rich men who could fund themselves He wants to be a success so he can go back to pursuing failure. He wants to go away from the campfire, into the woods and have the option of not coming back You know what his problem is now? He was and is, right. That's not necessarily a good thing He knows a lot of guys who are right And it's all over for them. The greatest freedom in the world—and the only real freedom for a scientist—is the freedom to be wrong. And that's the freedom Mark Roth is underwriting, with a company committed to saving the lives of bleeding and burning men.

Mark Roth keeps a little bottle on his desk a pharmaceutical-sized vial full of clear liquid It's got an orange plastic cap and a gold ribbon wrapped around the neck It's a hydrogen-sulfide derivative, and Ikaria's first suspended-animation product It's completed Phase I trials in Australia and Canada It's being tested on humans, to make sure it's safe He's gorking people now! He's dimming human candles! It's also being tested on pigs in Texas. The military is doing those tests. They're doing surgery on anesthetized pigs, and then gorking them, to see if they survive the bleedout. If it works, it's going to be considered for emergency use in Iraq. Would it have saved the life of his daughter? It might have She died a month after the surgery, but basically she bled out. She bled out.

You know, a few years ago, Roth went to Alaska on a trip. He went to Fairbanks, and it was freaking cold, man. It was 30 degrees below zero and he saw something that he never forgot He saw crows flying These were creatures made of feathers and hollow bones They had no right even to be alive at 30 below, but there they were, and they were flying. The image has haunted him to this day, because he can't explain it. And that's what science is. You do the same thing day after day, you see the same thing day after day, and then suddenly you see something unaccountable impossible—believe it or not—and it stays with you. All creatures die But the things that haunt you, they get to live forever M

INNOVATIONS



3-D WEB BROWSING
Duck under an arch at Stonehenge Fly over the Egyptian pyramids Examine in detail a tile of the Taj Mahal All from your desktop. A new Web program uses user-generated 2-D photographs to create 3-D images mapping everything from famous landmarks to your backyard. Explore spaces as if you were actually there, walking through doors or peeking around corners It's a globe for the twenty-first century

Developed by Blaise Aguera y Arcas Photosynth creates 3-D navigable images by detecting geometrical similarities (such as part of a window frame or an oddly shaped stone) within 2-D photos—many of them found on ordinary Web sites—and linking them together, no matter the camera type, photo resolution, or time of day the photo was taken Since Microsoft Live Labs released Photosynth in August for free to PC users people have already mapped most of the world's landmarks, in addition to their tattoos, bongs, and cubicles.



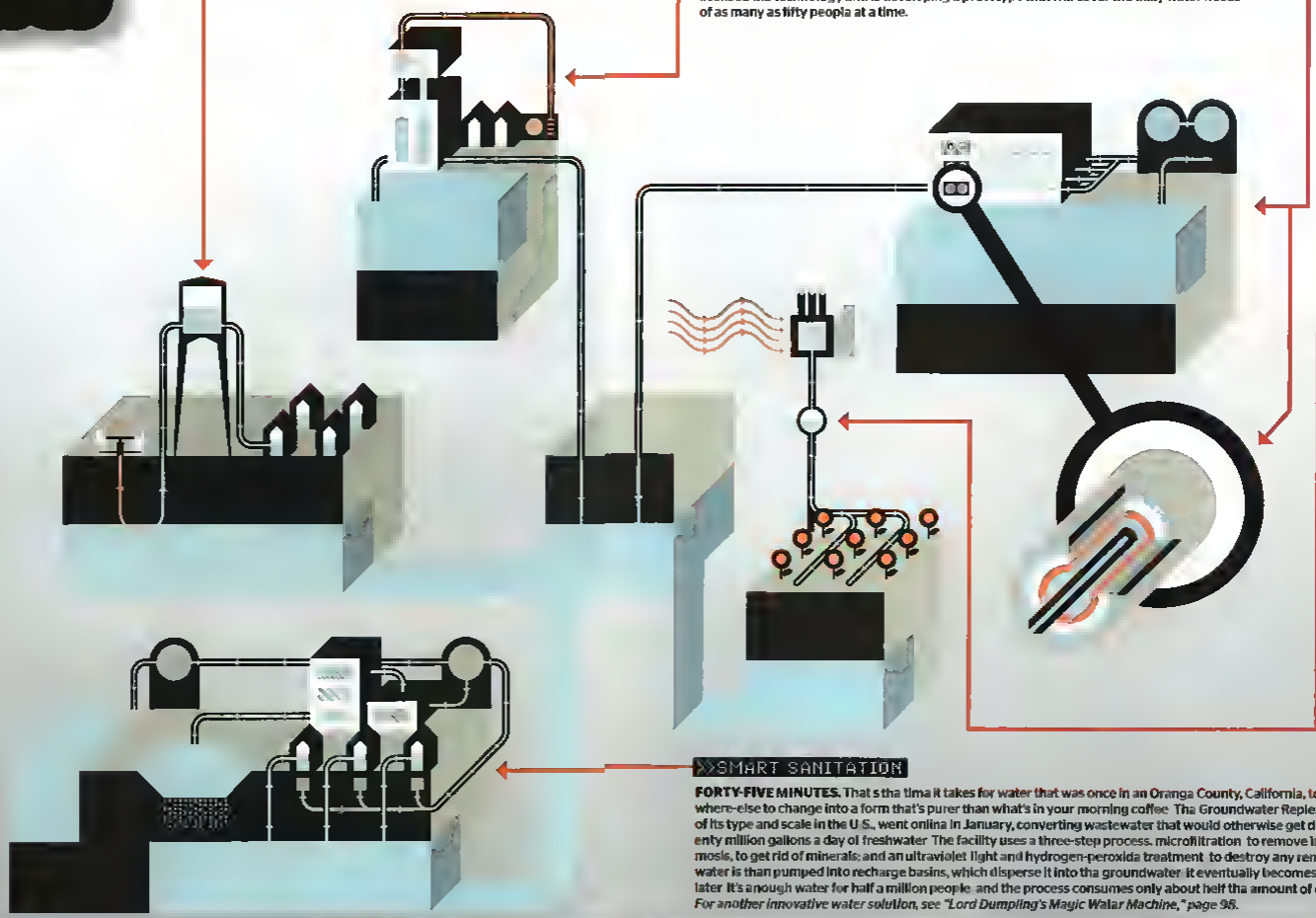
How to Fix the Future: Water

Rather than trying to solve the world water shortage through conservation, some radical entrepreneurs are doing something ingenious—making more of it

By DOUG CANTOR
Illustration by Lamosca

THE WORLD HAS a shortage of drinkable water but a flood of politicians, hippies, and bumper stickers continually telling us about it. Either we're not listening or all their conservation directives to flush less aren't working, because the shortage is only getting worse. Beijing's water table has dropped two hundred feet in the past twenty years. Fifty-eight percent of the population in sub-Saharan Africa is without regular drinking water. And the U.S. government projects that by 2013, thirty-six states could experience water shortages. All told, with a continuing surge in world population and temperatures, the United Nations estimates that by 2025, 1.8 billion people globally will face extreme water shortages.

In reaction, private companies, individual inventors, and local governments are beginning to prospect for unusual solutions in unexpected places—drilling beneath scorched ground in sub-Saharan Africa, treating and reusing the reeking material in sewage tanks, even snatching water particles right out of the air. Some of their approaches improve on existing technology; others are radically different. But their conceits are all the same. To solve the water crisis, we can't just use less. We need to find more.



>>THE PLAYPUMP

THERE'S CLEAN WATER under the ground in Africa, it just takes the right pumping mechanism to get it out. That's where PlayPump comes in. The nonprofit identifies a borehole near a school or a village, then installs a simple pump capable of extracting water from more than three hundred feet down and powers it with a merry-go-round. The faster the ride is spun, the more water is sent to the tank—as much as 370 gallons an hour. That's enough for about twenty-five hundred people. With plans to donate four thousand systems in ten countries, PlayPump expects to be providing water for ten million people by 2010.

>>SOLAR WATER MAKER

LARGE-SCALE DESALINATION is a smart solution if you live near the ocean and have energy to spare. But Nirmala Khandan, a civil-engineering professor at New Mexico State University, has developed a system that can be used in remote areas where there's brackish water available but no power. The system consists of two tall vertical pipes, one of which sits atop a tank to which saltwater has been added. The tops of the pipes are connected with a third horizontal pipe, essentially creating a vacuum that enables the water to boil at a lower-than-normal temperature. As it boils, fresh distilled water evaporates out and condenses in a second tank at the base of the second pipe. What little energy the system requires comes from a connected solar generator, which can give the batteries enough juice when the sun is out to last more than twenty-four hours. Worldwide Water, a Seattle company, recently licensed the technology and is developing a prototype that will cover the daily water needs of as many as fifty people at a time.

>>NANO DESALINATION

THE STRANGE THING about the water crisis is how much seemingly unusable water we have in our oceans. What we don't have is a way for desalination plants to pump the amount of water we need without sucking every last watt of energy from the grid. But that's about to change, starting at the molecular level. California start-up NanoH2O is developing desalination membranes engineered with nanomaterial that sift the salt out of ocean water at far lower pressure. The organic-polymer membranes, which will be available by 2010, will be compatible with existing desalination equipment, enabling plants to reduce their energy use by 20 per cent or to increase their output by 70 percent when maintaining current power consumption.

>>WATER WINDMILL

THE OCEAN ISN'T the only potentially endless supply of freshwater. Australian inventor Max Whisson's latest project uses air as its source, extracting water using a specialized windmill. The blades draw air into a pressurized chamber where it's cooled by refrigerated plates, causing the water vapor it contains to condense and run into a storage receptacle. A small version of the turbine could extract 50 to 130 gallons of water per day, with larger units producing as much as 500 gallons. Watar UnLimited, Whisson's company, expects to have a prototype that can service an individual home up and running early next year.

>>SMART SANITATION

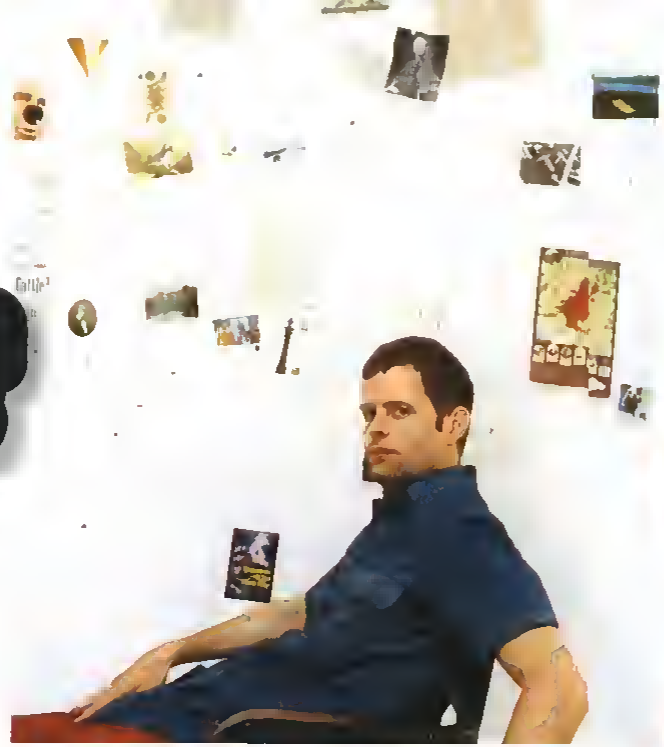
FORTY-FIVE MINUTES. That's the time it takes for water that was once in an Orange County, California, toilet, sewer, or God-knows-where-else to change into a form that's purer than what's in your morning coffee. The Groundwater Replenishment System, the first plant of its type and scale in the U.S., went online in January, converting wastewater that would otherwise get dumped into the ocean into seventy million gallons a day of freshwater. The facility uses a three-step process: microfiltration to remove bacteria and solids, reverse osmosis, to get rid of minerals; and an ultraviolet light and hydrogen-peroxide treatment to destroy any remaining organic compounds. The water is then pumped into recharge basins, which disperse it into the groundwater. It eventually becomes accessible six to twelve months later. It's enough water for half a million people, and the process consumes only about half the amount of energy of typical treatments.

For another innovative water solution, see "Lord Dumpling's Magic Water Machine," page 98.

Writing in Tongues

John Wray has written three novels—each astoundingly different, each cementing his place as one of our most astonishing and relevant young writers

By TYLER CABOT



There is a thing called voice. It's the thing—that simple, rugged tone—that makes a Cormac McCarthy novel unmistakable. The knowing, reflective style that Philip Roth has braided into twenty-five novels. It's what writers spend a lifetime trying to acquire and refine. And yet what's most miraculous about the works of novelist John Wray is that he goes beyond voice—he writes in tongues.

Wray, thirty-seven, has written three books, and each one is wholly different in location and genre, as well as in tone. But there is a distinctive undercurrent that runs through all his work, an attention to stylistic detail unheard of among young novelists today. Wray's books are each beautifully dark and evocative—not just because he knows how to write a plot that will make your eyes and heart freeze in place, but because he manages to appropriate the mode of a genre or time and then twist it and make it glow until the end product is something entirely new.

Open up his first novel, *The Right Hand of Sleep*—the book he wrote a decade ago, in his late twenties, while living in a tent in the basement of a warehouse in Brooklyn with no heat and no shower—and right there, the roots of the Holocaust smoldering in pre–World War II Austria. It's dark and lean and modernist, no explications, no happy bows. The rise of Nazism seems vivid and astonishingly urgent. A reviewer in *The New York Times* wondered, "Is it really possible ... for a young American to have conjured up such a book?"

Even more inexplicable is that Wray did a complete about-face in his next novel a few years later, *Canaan's Tongue*, about a slave-trading flimflam preacher on the Mississippi. It is big and nasty and fat with fantasy and the supernatural. The influences of Sherwood Anderson replaced by Thomas Pynchon. And yet the result is another astonishingly transportive experience, delivered in a voice that at times feels molded from the mud of the Mississippi, yet with an extrasensory sheen.

"You know, my dream, even when I started out, was to be to fiction something like Stanley Kubrick was to movies," says Wray, who grew up in Buffalo but spent nearly every summer in Austria, his mother's native country. "Someone who moved with a certain amount of grace and ease from one genre to the next and by virtue of not doing the same thing all the time was able to bring something new or strange to the genres he tackled."

Wray traces part of this approach to his background in poetry, which taught him to think about a work's texture and pigment as much as its narrative—style as important as plot. (He won the Academy of American Poets prize at NYU before dropping out of its M.F.A. in poetry program.) The other part is sanity. Wray came to writing relatively late—after stints driving cabs in Alaska, following cult alternative folksinger Daniel Johnston through Austin in the mid-1990s, then playing in, and touring with, various bands in New York City. He promoted *Canaan's Tongue* by using his $5,000 publicity budget to build a raft and float down the Mississippi, giving interviews and readings along the way. "The idea of spending three to five years just completely, obsessively, trying to get an attempt at a certain type of book as flawless as possible—and it's never flawless, it's always a disappointment in the end—and then to go back and try to achieve exactly the same book again, but maybe slightly better, would drive me insane," he says.

So instead, he rotates from one style to another, depending upon subject matter. And somehow he produces books that feel not just more fully realized than most fiction being published today but also more relevant. His next novel, *Lowboy*, about a schizophrenic teenager riding the subway through modern-day New York City—which Wray describes as evoking aspects of Raymond Chandler and British playwright Harold Pinter—will be published in March. And once again, he renders a specific experience utterly different from any he has written before, yet beautifully achieved, somehow fanuhar, and unmistakably his own.

The studio wall in Brooklyn where Wray is outlining his next novel, a comic chronicle of a family of renegade physicists, which Wray describes as in tune with Günter Grass and David Foster Wallace

THREE EXCERPTS, THREE STYLES



The Right Hand of Sleep, 2001

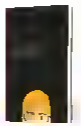
She was unaware of his hand, unaware of the room, unaware even that she was suffering. Maybe she isn't, thought Voxlauer, taking in a breath. The thought seemed hollow and false at first but bloomed in him slowly, like a drink of wine. He sat up in bed to look at her.

She slept with her knuckles to her mouth like a teething child, indifferent to everything but sleep. In the dull glow of the lamp she looked like something seen through silt-dark water. Gradually as Voxlauer watched her she became frightening to him, otherworldly, alien in her completeness. It seemed to him that if she awoke she would look at him calmly and he would die.



Canaan's Tongue, 2005

Asa Trist, gentle-farmer's son, spit on at birth, mother-coddled, good worker, learned well the following—: the Hand of Glory. Cut a hand from a runaway and wrap it in a winding-sheet. Press it thoroughly to drain the fluid from it. The blood, the water, the lymph. Keep it for a week in an earthen jar mixed with pepper and saltpeter under the ground. Dry it in the heat of the sun or if the sun is not ample in a cotton-wood-fed furnace. The fat which runneth from the hand is mixed with wax to make a candle. Said candle is then put into the hand's own fingers. Light from said candle will cure any spell of whiteness. Light from said candle will bring horrors to a child.



Lowboy, forthcoming in March 2009

My bed like an envelope with a letter inside it a love letter sprinkled lightly with perfume. Eau de Bedpan someone called it. I could have mailed myself to you Emily but you'd have returned me to sender. No? If no then another question did you read the letter carefully did you give it your complete attention Emily did you understand it. Have you noticed about the tunnel it's a funny thing it's the one and the only The Tunnel of Love. Did you understand my letter Emily are you listening at all. I hear you listening I hear you breathing I don't have to ask are you flat or dried up or alive. I'm in love Emily! Could you help me a little. Could you help me by taking your clothes off and spreading your legs.



TAPAN PARIKH, 34

The real hundred-dollar laptop is a cell phone

With more than 80 percent of the global population having access to cell phone service, the network for a technological revolution in the poorest parts of the world is already in place—it just needs to be harnessed, tweaked and translated. This is Tapan Parikh's charge. A computer scientist specializing in interface design at the University of California, Berkeley, Parikh studies communications glitches and other problems that hinder the open market and distribution of private aid and then designs simple, open source downloadable cell phone interfaces to fix the bottleneck.

For example: when Parikh realized that the efforts of microfinance groups in India were hobbled by paperwork, he came up with a system of embedding financial documents with bar codes. Now, rather than having to keep records by hand, a user can take a cell phone picture of a bar code and the interface automatically prompts the user—with voice prompts for the illiterate—to input the numbers. The result is accurate record keeping, greater transparency and a higher loan success rate. It's a technique he's used over and again—retrofitting cell phones so coffee growers can find the best prices for their beans, enabling farmers to better document their aid needs, and arming local health workers with the network to better diagnose and treat illnesses.

His future goal is to apply his ideas to the U.S. and the opportunities are endless—inner city students using cell phones to do schoolwork, social workers tracking clients with pictures, shelters finding beds for the homeless at the push of a button. The technology is there. Parikh just needs the time to harness it. —DOUG CANTOR

ILLUSTRATION BY J. MAY TURRELL

PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRISTINA PAIGE



Dave Arnold, Food Hacker

Every art needs its scientist. Now cooking has its own

By DAVID KATZ

You're thirsty You have just tried a crunchy handful of one of Dave Arnold's edible experiments—homemade pork rinds that taste like fatty Cracker Jacks—and now you'd like something to wash it down with. The easy thing to do would be to pour a cup of tap water from the chrome dispenser in this classroom at the French Culinary Institute, where Arnold runs the culinary-technology program. But that would not be a very Dave Arnold way of getting a glass of water.

Instead, he snatches the cup from your hand and hurries to a closet-sized room containing two industrial gas tanks—carbon dioxide and nitrous oxide. One of his lab techs connects the gas mixer's rubber hose to one end of a two-liter bottle filled with New York City tap and begins to inject the water with gas. Arnold takes a sip, makes a dissatisfied face, adjusts the ratio of nitrous to carbon dioxide, and hands over a homemade carbonated water that is soft, creamy, and sweet. That is the Dave Arnold way of getting a glass of water.



Arnold, left, and in his food lab, grinding herbs the Dave Arnold way: with liquid nitrogen.

Over the past two decades chefs who rely on science to push the boundaries of cooking have had a huge impact on the world's fine-dining scene. Arnold is their enabler. As cooking science has grown more sophisticated, standard kitchen equipment and techniques just don't do the trick. That's why FCI, a school with roots in traditional cooking and techniques, has built a whole new department around Arnold—a tireless inventor and experimenter who the school believes will not only develop new techniques but also make FCI the intellectual epicenter for this kind of cuisine.

"There's no reason you can't mess with anything and everything," says Arnold, as he manually checks on one of several experiments he has in progress. But he stresses that there's no reason to mess with things if the end result won't be better than the original. "When you create a good damned delicious product that you can't make in any other way, and it's not just a gimmick, that's when we win," he says.

Although Arnold, thirty-seven, is frequently consulted by the world's most avant-garde chefs—Momofuku's David Chang, Jean Georges's Johnny Iuzzini, and especially WD-50's Wylie Dufresne—he has had no formal culinary training himself. His degree from Yale is in philosophy, and he has an M.F.A. from Columbia. But he's always had an innate mechanical ability and a deep passion for cooking and food history. So one night at WD-50, Arnold introduced himself to Dufresne, and the two discovered a mutual obsessive interest in pushing the technical aspects of cooking. They began an informal collaboration that would eventually lead Arnold to FCI, where he now finds himself teaching students how to operate a rotary evaporator.

Currently the evaporator holds a flask filled with vodka that's blended with enough habanero pepper to kill a man. When the machine is turned on, the alcohol gradually evaporates and collects in another container, taking the habanero flavor with it but leaving the color and severe heat behind. The result is crystal-clear booze that tastes like habanero pepper—deep and smoky—but without any of the habanero burn.

Arnold decides to mix the habanero vodka with ice cubes made of clarified apple juice and garnish it with a cucumber infused with lime. Then he fills an insulated bucket with liquid nitrogen (temperature: –320 degrees), reminds his guests to lower their safety goggles, dips a glass in by its stem, and pulls it out so cold it's smoking. That is the Dave Arnold way to chill a cocktail glass.



ESTHER DUFLO, 36

Does foreign aid work? With MIT's Poverty Action Lab we can now answer that question

Picture this: You're the head of an aid agency working to improve conditions in an impoverished African nation and you've got $50 million to spend as you see fit. So you pick a hundred struggling schools and supply them with the works—teacher training, new textbooks, free meals for students, a free medical clinic. And at the end of the school year, hey presto, attendance and grades have gone up across the board, just as you'd hoped. That's great.

But what have you learned?

Nothing. At least nothing you didn't know already. Naturally spending vast sums of money on desperately poor students improved their performance. But was it the teacher training that had the biggest impact or the textbooks? The free meals or the health gains the clinics provided? Because all the schools got the same aid package, there's no way to sort it out. And because of that, when you apply for funds to keep your project going next year, all you can say is "money helps." So please give us more of it.

And that is the story of economic aid over the last half century. Tens of billions have been spent, and there have been measurable gains across the developing world. What there hasn't been is a systematic way to determine what kind of aid works best. And so aid as it exists is a game of chance: You lay your money down and pray the cards break in your favor.

Esther Duflo is changing that. *"No tess tyoobs aen ze lap,"* she says as she opens the door to a spartan room in a building on the edge of the MIT campus. It's true. There are no test tubes in this lab. But it *is* a lab—the Jameel Poverty Action Lab, to be precise—and it's filled with the equipment of the modern economist: whirring computers and a dozen brilliant young students all busily crunching a galaxy of hard-earned numbers.

Duflo, a native of Paris, cofounded JPAL in 2003 when she was an assistant economics professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The lab's purpose is simple: to apply the tools of pharmacology—randomized testing and double-blind trials—to economic development projects. Just as drugs are tested for efficacy, so Duflo believes should aid dollars. Her goal is to determine precisely what kinds of development projects work most effectively.

Take, for example, the issue of education raised above. It's enormously important in the developing world. Better educated students become higher-earning adults. In an early experiment conducted by colleague Michael Kremer of Harvard, textbooks were distributed randomly to half of one hundred schools in Kenya. Testing determined that the textbooks did not improve overall academic performance—while an existing program that treated students for parasitic worms showed that better school attendance trumped better tools. Lesson? Skip the books and invest in health care. It's cheaper, more effective, and crucially, is now proven. Donors can invest in it with confidence, making it more likely that they will.

Now just five years old, JPAL is running trials in twenty-two nations and employing hundreds of researchers, many of them locals. And the World Bank, the biggest bull and bellwether in the herd of development agencies, has been consulting with JPAL from the beginning and implementing its philosophy. Many Bank programs now have built-in experimental protocols that permit efficacy testing, and other agencies have begun to follow its lead. As for Duflo herself, she is reportedly on the short list for the Clark Medal, economics' highest honor.

But there is another measure of JPAL's impact, and it may prove to be the lab's greatest achievement. Development economics has been split by partisan fighting in recent years, with aidists—those who support giving money directly—squaring off against marketists, who support helping people to make money for themselves. JPAL's philosophy ends the argument, and in the most concrete and moral terms. Aid is about creating not wealth but wealth's benefits. How that happens does not matter—*that* it happens is imperative. Money is tight. Needs are increasing. We can no longer afford to gamble. Because of Esther Duflo's insight, we no longer have to.

—TIM HEFFERNAN

PHOTOGRAPHS BY STEFAN RUIZ

ILLUSTRATION BY WINY TURRI



TOWARD A FUTURE IN WHICH PIXELS AND CODE AND COMPUTERS WILL MAKE YOU CRY AND FEEL AND LOVE

Video-game programmer Jason Rohrer's solitary and stubborn quest to save our twenty-first-century souls

By JASON FAGONE

Photographs by Richard Foulser



What if, back in the day before TVs were in every waiting room and bedroom and bar, before the perpetual buzz of blue background noise changed the way we think and speak, before the easy escapism of *M*A*S*H* and Wolf Blitzer and *Ice Road Truckers*, before our leaders began to speak to us like third-rate voice-over actors—what if some influential genius had recognized the threat and stood up and yelled *Stop*?

The next dominant communications medium in America is undeniably even more potent than TV. It presents our brains with beguiling tasks. It commandeers our circuitry. And we can actually issue commands back.

That's the promise and the terror of this new form. We can interact with its entertainments. We can summon new layers of noise and color. The American video game is enabling us to live out deeper escapist fantasies than TV ever has. Right now we're mainly using this new medium to imagine that we are space aliens and NFL quarterbacks and mercenaries with hearts of steel. But it doesn't have to be this way.

A NAKED KID and a freakishly tall man walk in a meadow. The meadow is their front yard. It pokes up from among the sheared lawns of upstate New York's Route 11B like a Mohawk, purposeful and defiant. The kid's hair is long and blond and, on first glance, feminine. He wears orange rain boots, his uncircumcised penis free in the breeze. The tall man wears military-style cargo pants and a red T-shirt that says MONTREAL INTERNATIONAL GAME SUMMIT. He's barefoot. His dirty-blond hair is spiky from not showering. A cop pulls into his driveway. The man chats with the cop. The cop says he just got a call about a "tall guy and a naked girl down by the gas station" and dropped by to investigate.

The tall man is amused.

The cop—burly, bearded, the sitcom essence of small-town cop—doesn't need to ask the tall man what he does for a living. He already knows. Everyone in this town knows. The tall man is famous here in Potsdam, New York, an aging hamlet near the Canadian border, because of his meadow. The meadow inspired a court case and made the front pages of the local newspapers. The tall man fought a village ordinance that required him to cut his meadow to a height of ten inches. He represented himself in court, and it came out after the trial that this man earned a living by making video games. Which didn't make much sense to the town's inhabitants, like this cop here, who's got to be having a hard time reconciling the tall man's career in computers with the apparently Luddite lifestyle on display: the meadow, the tiny ranch home it obscures, the naked hippie kid, the wife standing on the porch with the red hair and freckles and fiery green eyes, and the baby in a cloth sling. Later today, the tall man will hold the baby off the front porch, above the cedar bushes, and whisper *'Psssssss, psssssss'* in his ear, and the baby will pee into the bush, on command, just like that. Pavlovian.



Rohrer and his wife, Lauren, chose to live in Potsdam, New York, because it offered a great food co-op and enough land to cultivate a meadow.

The cop seems to be buying what the tall man is saying. He gets back in his squad car, pulls back onto 11B, and drives away, satisfied that the tall man is weird, yes, but harmless.

IN 2007, the tall man, whose name is Jason Rohrer, uploaded a free game to his Web site. It used a mere two megabytes of disk space and a thin horizontal stripe of color on the screen. So simple. In Passage, you're this little pixelated guy. You live in the stripe of color. The stripe is twelve pixels tall. It's green. All else is blackness. Your job is to move up and down and left and right through the stripe—the "forest"—in search of treasure chests, sort of like in the Legend of Zelda.

As you walk, the stripe shimmers and flickers, the fuzzy pixels in front of you scroll into sharpness, and the pixels you've already traveled blur in your wake. The stripe is your whole world. But soon you have to make a choice: share the world or keep it to yourself. You meet a girl. Your fat-pixeled soul mate. Link up with her and a heart explodes. You're in love. Now she sticks to you as you move through the forest less easily than before. It's a trade-off. You can get more treasure by staying single, but bond with your "wife" and you earn double the points for every step you take.

If you're like most people, you'll choose the comforts of companionship. Only, as you trudge across the stripe, something happens. Your pixels begin to fade, gray out. Your hair recedes by degrees. Your wife slurs into a matronly shape. It hits you. This is going to happen to me. Age, decrepitude, ugliness.

Also. At least I won't be alone. Somebody loves me. Ha-ha-ha.

Then—*thwack*—she dies.

Jesus. Weren't expecting that. There's a tombstone with a little cross.

Then—*thwack*—you die, too.

The first person to cry playing Passage was Rohrer himself, as he was programming it. All that summer, he watched one of his neighbors die of cancer. She was a nice old woman with a beautiful garden. "Her whole life, she had said if she ever got cancer, she wouldn't want to go through chemotherapy," Rohrer says. "But once it happened to her, she changed her mind. . . . We watched her go through chemotherapy, and she essentially just rotted away. And she died in six months anyway." It wasn't only sad. It was irrational. So Rohrer, a few months shy of his thirtieth birthday, made a game about the inevitability of death. "Yes, you could spend your five minutes trying to accumulate as many points as possible," he wrote in a twelve-hundred-word creator's statement, "but in the end, death is still coming for you."

Some players didn't know what to make of Passage. The video-game blog Kotaku wrote, "It's a weird little game, but sweet, and worth spending a couple of minutes with. But weird." For others, though, it was a revelation. Games don't have to be bloated and huge and violent. They can be small and quiet and deep. Writers struggled for metaphors; to the tech blog Boing Boing, Passage was "a pregnant, forlorn sentence" of a game, while a reviewer from *Wired* opted for "a superb and tightly crafted sonnet," gushing, "More than any game I've ever played, it illustrates how a game can be a fantastically expressive, artistic vehicle for exploring the human condition."

Passage was sad, it was sincere, it was personal, it was mysterious, it was existential, and for all these reasons, it was new. The big boys of gaming, a universe away from Potsdam, emailed it to one another. Clint Hocking, a designer at Ubisoft best known for Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell, was so blown away by Passage that he made it a focus of his Game Developers Conference talk earlier this year. In front of an audience full of the industry's most influential game designers, Hocking growled, "Why can't we make a game that fucking *means something*? A game that *matters*? You know? We wonder all the time if games are art, if computers can make you cry, and all that. Stop wondering. The answer is yes to both. Here's a game that made me cry. It did. It really did."

He put up a slide of Passage.

Then he put up a slide of another small indie game, the Marriage, coded by Rohrer's friend Rod Humble. The Marriage uses brightly-colored circles and squares to model . . . a marriage. Humble claims to have made it after going through "a really heavy Kandinsky period."

"I think it sucks ass that two guys tinkering away in their spare time have done as much or more to advance the industry this year than the other hundred thousand of us working fifty-hour weeks," said Hocking.

Here was a cute video game that made jaded men weep by commanding a sophisticated and rare power that lay—where? Where in those two megabytes, those twelve pixels?

"I AM PREPARED to believe that video games can be elegant, subtle, sophisticated, challenging, and visually wonderful," Roger Ebert, the world's most famous film critic, wrote in 2005. "But I believe the nature of the medium prevents it from moving beyond craftsmanship to the stature of art. To my knowledge, no one in or out of the field has ever been able to cite a game worthy of comparison with the great dramatists, poets, filmmakers, novelists, and composers. . . . video games represent a loss of those precious hours we have available to make ourselves more cultured, civilized, and empathetic."

This is what the video-game industry lacks. Not money; it rakes in $40 billion globally per year, even more than Hollywood. Not influence, it's got a lock on the hearts and minds of America's eighteen- to thirty-four-year-old males. What it lacks is legitimacy. The video game in 2008 is a ghettoized creative form, more ghettoized even than comic books, at least comics have their hipster auteurs, their graphic novelists, their Chris Wares and Daniel Clowes and Brian K. Vaughans (see page 172). But there are no video-game auteurs whose names ring out in the wider culture.

> "WE WONDER IF GAMES ARE ART, IF COMPUTERS CAN MAKE YOU CRY," SAID A TOP GAME DESIGNER. "STOP WONDERING. THE ANSWER IS YES. HERE'S A GAME THAT MADE ME CRY. IT DID. IT REALLY DID."

According to Jason Rohrer, the reason for this is simple: "Ebert's right." Games suck. Game companies have spent so many years trying to make skulls explode complexly and water ripple prettily that they haven't invested any time in learning how to make games that are as emotionally dense as the best novels and films. Most games are a waste of time. Soulless. Empty. Rohrer is far from the only game maker who believes this. In fact, a growing number of game-makers in positions of power at large companies—Electronic Arts, Ubisoft, etc.—aren't interested in continuing to defend the industry against its critics. Because, one, it's hard to see how the critics are wrong; hard to

To play Passage, go to esquire.com/rohrer-game.



see how Halo 3 and Grand Theft Auto IV aren't what they seem to be. Murder simulators. *Really fun* murder simulators. And, two, If you're a middle-aged game-maker and you're going to see *Children of Men* on the weekend with your wife and kids and getting your mind blown, you hit a point where you *want* to do something better, more important, than making blood flow realistically.

In truth, ambitious game-makers want it to be true that games are polluting the minds of our youth, because that means games really are touching our brains in sophisticated ways, and therefore games have room to grow. Like Passage, they can be art.

And if this new breed of emotional game can also rake in the cash, well, all the better. Under way right now is a high-stakes race to create the *Citizen Kane* of video games: an "AAA" title (the industry's equivalent of a big-budget summer movie) that also pushes the needle forward artistically. The best current contender is a project code-named LMNO, part of Stephen Spielberg's development deal with Electronic Arts, which has been described as *North by Northwest* meets *E.T.* Your character in the game will be a spy who encounters a mysterious, sexy woman. How much help she offers will be dependent upon how well you cultivate her as your partner and guide. Essentially,

> THE GAME IS TRYING TO REVERSE DECADES OF INFANTILISM IN VIDEO GAMES AND CULTURE, IN WHICH YOU GET COINS FOR DOING STUPID TASKS. IT'S NOT GOING TO CODDLE *AWESOME JOB!*

LMNO aims to be the first major video game whose action will not pivot on jumping puzzles or twitch-reflex fusillades but on a nuanced relationship.

As it turns out, the expert that Spielberg's partners hired to serve as an "idea guy"—a guy who "sort of instinctively thinks this way," according to the project's creative director at Electronic Arts, Doug Church—is Jason Rohrer.

And Rohrer is happy to do it, of course. To consult for EA and Spielberg. Who wouldn't be? But while he thinks the game is "very, very cool," ultimately it's just a gig. Because it's not Rohrer's goal to make big games. Because making a big-budget emotional game now is a lot like trying to run before you can walk. Premature. Because the video-game industry lacks something even more crucial than respect: a basic grammar of emotion. Film has it, novels have it, songs have it. Heroes to idolize and imitate, codified bodies of knowledge you can soak up over a lifetime or try to have dumped into you at an M.F.A. program or film school. But a game-maker is in a different position altogether. Nowhere to look. No place to start. "We just have no idea," says Chris Hecker, who spent the last five years working alongside gaming god Will Wright on the hugely ambitious, sprawling Spore. "The question I have is, Are games in fifty years go-

ing to be recognizable? Is there a game we'll look back at in fifty years and say, yeah, that was the model?"

Here is Jason Rohrer's audacious bet: no. The models don't exist. So he's setting out to build them.

"I DON'T KNOW if you can smell me yet, but by the end of the day, you will probably be able to.'

Rohrer doesn't use deodorant. He washes his hair only twice a month. He doesn't put on a new pair of clothes in the morning because he gave most of his clothes away years ago. He owns four pairs of boxer shorts. If he owned any more, he or his wife would have to spend more time washing them, which would make them both more reliant on electricity to run the washer. He keeps his fridge unplugged for the same reason. No fridge, no meat, no meat: no spoilage in an electrical storm. Open the fridge and all you see are vegan grains. "There, that's quinoa. You had quinoa before? It's really good." He bakes a loaf of bread every other morning and feeds it to his family at lunch, along with lentil soup. Every day: same lunch. For weeks at a time. The alternative is to starve. Despite his consulting fee from EA, the family budget is $14,500 a year, the income pieced together from PayPal donations from his Web site, freelance writing and [*continued on page 188*]

INNOVATIONS



IRON MAN SUIT
It looks like a Hollywood invention. But it's not. Yoshiyuki Sankai, a professor at the University of Tsukuba in Japan, has developed a bodysuit that melds man and machine, letting its wearer lift anything from a couch to a building beam without much effort. He calls it Robot Suit HAL (Hybrid Assistive Limb).

When worn, sensors on each limb detect the bioelectrical signals your brain sends when it wants to move a muscle. Then motors attached to the shoulders, elbows, knees, and waist move the joints, taking over much of the hard work from the muscles and enabling the wearer to carry hundreds of pounds. Sankai envisions HAL aiding the elderly and disabled, or helping rescuers move large, heavy objects that usually require a crane. Recently he broke ground on a factory that will produce five hundred of his suits.

The United States Army is working on its own version of a robosuit. Its exoskeleton prototype offers enough range of motion to climb stairs or play soccer, and enough strength to carry a soldier on your back. Even while playing soccer





PHOTOGRAPH BY NOAH KALINA

Lunatic

Reggie Watts began his career as a singer in various bands in the early 1990s. Then he started being himself. Crazy. Absurd. And the people laughed. They're still laughing.

By NICOLE TOURTELOT

He arrives onstage with enormous amber rings dripping like tree sap from his fingers, his Afro a Miracle-Gro spider plant. Sometimes he's painted a pinkie nail pink. He might be wearing a ridiculous sweater.

Then he lays down a track. He starts with the sound of a kick drum, from deep in his throat, recorded into a loop sampler—a small machine often used by guitarists to layer melodies. He adds a snare with a few controlled exhales. A couple of high notes with his tongue against his teeth. And then he starts to sing, in French or gibberish German. Morphing imperceptibly into a cockney slang, he seems to be talking about something from a human-resources manual or a dating disaster. Or whatever else comes to mind.

He calls it "ambient comedy," with the same hint of rosy irony that characterizes much of his work. Improvised, absurdist stand-up comedy, with a direction that even he doesn't know, because he rarely prepares.

One song that began as improvised material now regularly ends the show. "Fuck Shit Stack," a minutes-long string of expletives over a beat, shifts into a cogent deconstruction of materialism and sexism. "I like women. I like the concept of a woman. I like to take that concept and reduce it to an object." Then into a critique of the facsimile of a facsimile that gangsta rap has become. "It's a stack of fuck shit, on top of itself."

The thirty-six-year-old's bio reads like a Hemingway novel. Reginald Lucien Frank Roger Watts was born to a French mother and a U.S. Air Force officer stationed in Germany. The family lived briefly in Spain before relocating to Great Falls, Montana. He plays the piano, synthesizer, and violin and has a four- and-a-half-octave vocal range. He's performed with Black Eyed Peas and Regina Spektor. Yet what he might be best known for, among the YouTube set, anyway, is a soulful tune called "What About Blowjobs."

You could call him a sonic Salvador Dalí. Or the beat-boxing love child of John Cage and T. S. Eliot, with the parenthetical ramblings of David Foster Wallace. But what Reggie Watts does is not Orwellian, Shakespearean, or Kafkaesque (though he does those guys well). It's Wattsian. And when all else fails, he does a killer Bill Cosby.

BEAU WILLIMON, 31, PLAYWRIGHT

The most promising young dramatist in America

All great drama is about negotiating with loss, but the losses in political drama are something else. The egos are titanic. The ambitions are stratospheric. And only the sharpest playwrights can cut through all the pathos and bullshit to find moments of genuine humanity and—God willing—a little entertainment. That's what Beau Willimon manages to accomplish with his latest work, *Farragut North*, and it's what makes him one of the most incisive and exciting playwrights working in theater right now and soon, well beyond.

The two-act play, which recently made its off-Broadway debut and is headed to the big screen with George Clooney and Leonardo DiCaprio producing, follows a young press aide to a maverick candidate as he tries to navigate the snake pit of presidential politics without losing his soul. Filled with rat-a-tat banter and soaring monologues, it pulses with yearning and loss—not just of an election but of ambition and idealism—and rings true in large part because Willimon worked on various political campaigns before writing it.

"I write about a lot of different worlds," says Willimon. "I've written about the military in *War Story* because I grew up around it. I've written about rural North Carolina in *Smoke in the Mountains* because I have a lot of family from down south." He writes about what he knows, and he tells stories about how we live. Willimon's loss is most certainly our gain.

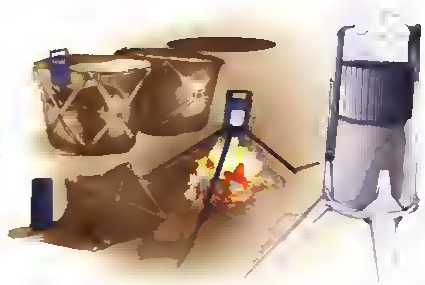
—RICHARD DORMENT

Read some of Willimon's work in "Scenes from Movies Not Yet Made" on page 130.

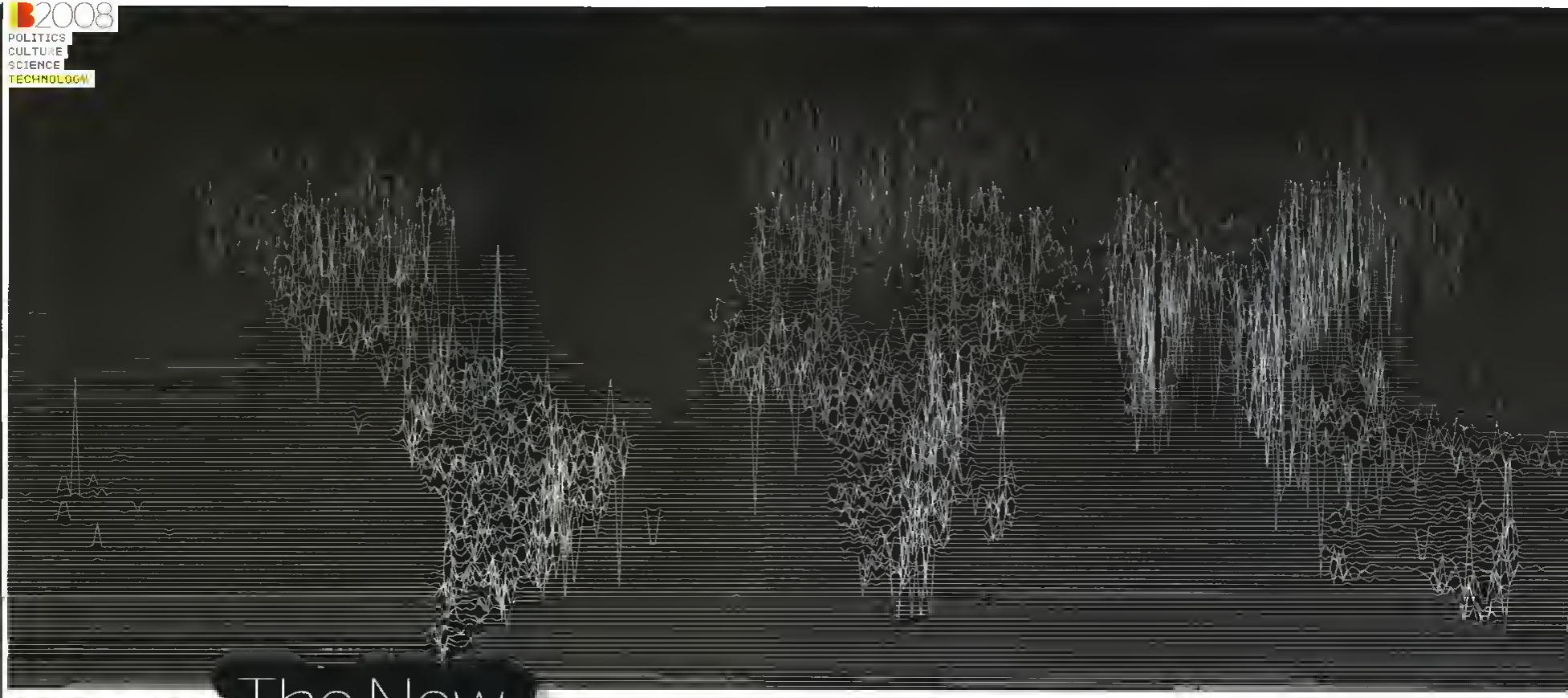
INNOVATIONS

NO-ELECTRICITY FRIDGE

More than a billion people lack access to electricity and refrigeration, which means they also lack access to important vaccines that need to be kept cool. Nonprofits are pouring millions into developing vaccines that don't need refrigeration, but tech venture capitalist Adam Grosser has a different idea: change the fridge. Working with a thermodynamics team at Stanford, Grosser built a thermos-sized device that contains a refrigerant that's triggered when the device is heated and left to cool. It then acts like a powerful cold pack, turning anything from a jug to a hole in the ground into a twenty-four-hour mini fridge. At roughly fifty dollars apiece, Grosser's device could potentially bring people in the developing world high-maintenance medicines—and the simple pleasure of a cold drink on a hot day.



PHOTOGRAPH BY FRED DUFOUR/AFP



The New Cartographers

Four innovative mapmakers who are helping to reinvent the scope, the purpose, and the very idea of maps

By BUDDY KITE

By training, they aren't really cartographers at all. They're architects, designers, and machine-learning specialists who are mining human behavior to build maps that are more about people than places. Like traditional cartography, the new maps combine science, technical skill, and aesthetics to display information spatially, but the information they display is radically different. And the map itself—dynamic, thematic, changeable—has become an instrument of discovery. That's why everybody from epidemiologists seeking to understand how an infectious disease is spreading to advertisers wanting to know where an ad will reach the most eyes is interested in their ability to reveal previously invisible patterns and relationships.

There is more and finer information available now, a planet-load of accessible, aggregatable, and anonymous location data out there, much of it originating from the spread of mobile phones, GPS systems, and other wireless products with "device discovery" functionality. "We have this condition where digital technology is becoming increasingly smaller and distributed in the environment," says Carlo Ratti, director of SENSEable City Laboratory and associate professor of the practice of urban technologies at MIT. "In a certain sense, this is the first time ever we can describe a city in real time."

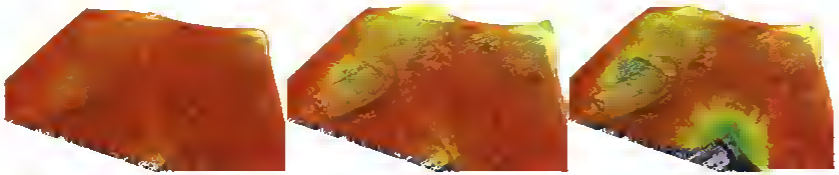
Geographical maps are the preferred canvas on which to visualize all these digital bread crumbs, but they are anything but static. "It's not just latitudes, longitudes, and streets, but, Who are these people hanging out in this place?" Tony Jebara, chief scientist at Sense Networks, explains. "These ideas go back. Shakespeare said, 'What is the city but the people?' And instead of saying here's the city and the street grid, you let the people define the city." There are also simply more people creating and editing maps. Online mapping tools like Google Maps have spawned endless interactive mash-ups that do everything from rate a neighborhood's walkability to calculate cab fares.

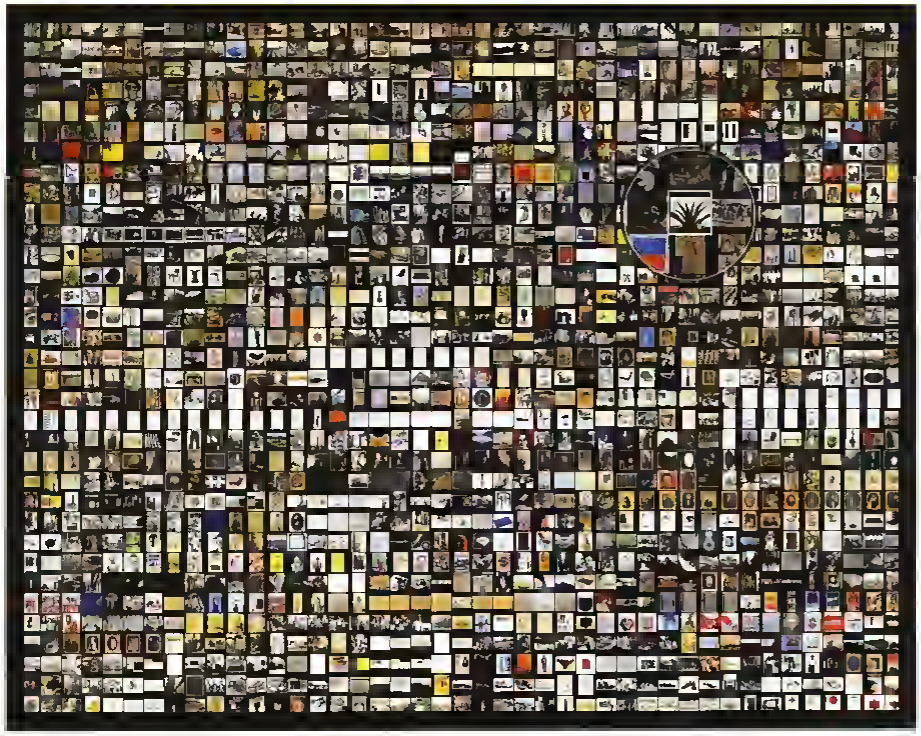
The best maps, of course, are functional and pretty. Here, a survey of some of the best work in the field right now.

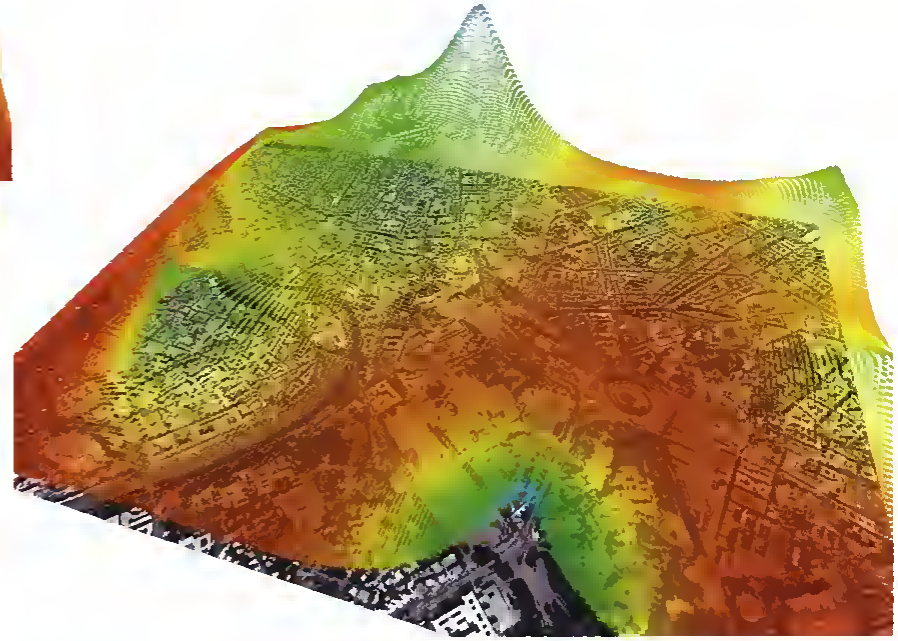
LAURA KURGAN, 48

There's a staggering amount of data powering this pretty map, which depicts ongoing population changes across the earth. Each spike's highest or lowest point, depending on whether a city is growing or shrinking, represents the projected difference in population between 1990 and 2015. These figures were given life by Laura Kurgan, an architect and director of the Spatial Information Design Lab at Columbia University. Kurgan visualized the data by displaying longitude and latitude on the x-axis and animating the y-axis to show population for a particular year. The urban areas projected to grow the most: Bethal, China; Ghaziabad, India; and Sanaa, Yemen.

Population Shifts, Cities
Detail from "Native Land. Stop, Eject," Cartier Foundation, Paris, November 21, 2008, to March 30, 2009. Project team: Diller Scofidio + Renfro, Mark Hansen, Laura Kurgan, Ben Rubin, in collaboration with Jeremy Linzee, Robert Pietrusko, Stewart Smith, Aaron Meyers. Visualization of CIESIN Gridded Population of the World, 1990–2015.







ERIC RODENBECK, 38

The founder and creative director of Stamen Design in San Francisco, Rodenbeck has carved out a niche as a multidisciplinary designer with a serious technological bent. Recent projects range from a dynamic hurricane-tracking map for msnbc.com to a series of live interactive maps visualizing activity on the Web site digg.com. Much of his and his studio's emphasis is on creating interactive environments where users can explore data and discover patterns themselves.

ArtScope, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art
The museum asked Stamen Design to create a "map" for wandering online among thirty-six hundred works from its permanent collection. Stamen produced this giant interactive matrix—or canvas or "slippy map." "We had a long back and forth about what we were going to name the thing," says Chad Coerver of SFMOMA. "Is it a browser? Is it a map? An online gallery? The fact that we had a difficult time coming to a consensus is probably the best indication that we've gotten our hands on something new and interesting." As a user moves the cursor over a piece, it enlarges and information about it appears on a side panel. You can find it at sfmoma.org/artscope

CARLO RATTI, 37

An architect and civil engineer who practices in Turin, Italy, Ratti studies technology's effect on how people interact with their cities. Or in his own words: "How to marry concrete and silicon." In 2003, he established the SENSEable City Laboratory at MIT, where he is an associate professor of the practice of urban technologies. His lab's current work includes a New York City trash-tracking project in which trash will be digitally tagged with "smart dust" and tracked to its final destination, revealing inefficiencies in the waste-disposal system.

Real-Time Rome
Ratti overlaid live, aggregate data from existing mobile-phone and transportation networks during the course of two days onto a basic map of Rome. The result: a picture of the city as a pulsing organism. Opposite page, top: Rome on July 9 and 10, 2006, during and after the World Cup final match that was played in Germany. From left to right: afternoon, evening, midnight. Above: The following evening, when the victors returned and Romans celebrated. Text messages were sent, taxis congregated.



TONY JEBARA, 34

A graduate of the Media Lab at MIT, Jebara combines computer science, statistics and graphic design to create new ways for humans and computers to interact. He is now the director of Columbia University's Machine Learning Lab, which explores how to take massive amounts of existing GPS data and reduce it to more user-friendly forms. Jebara is also the chief scientist at the technology company Sense Networks, which has developed a proprietary analytics engine called Macrosense that collects huge streams of location data in real time for its consumer application, Citysense.

Citysense
A free mobile-phone application, Citysense locates people with similar interests in the same locale. By collecting various sources of GPS data, Citysense produces a visual description of the flow of people around a city. (It is available for BlackBerry users in San Francisco and will be rolled out in New York and Chicago in 2009. An iPhone version is expected in December.) Citysense 2.0, out next year, will be able to build a model of a user's interests and where he or she spends time, and then "sense" where others with similar interests are at any moment. It will also place the user into a color-coded tribe, e.g., bankers are green, metalheads are red. You look at your phone and see a concentration-density map of where they're congregating.

The Day the Men Died

...and other stories comic-book renegade **Brian K. Vaughan** is bringing to Hollywood

By BENJAMIN PERCY



Brian K. Vaughan is a weird guy. Just crazy. The stories he comes up with, like his graphic novel *Y: The Last Man* (pictured). It takes place in a world in which all the men have died of a mysterious plague. There's a battle for the last standing man. A mass female war. Yet amazingly, despite the far-fetched premise, the story still comes across as compulsively real. From the buzz-cut protesters cheering the demise of men to the widows of Republican senators who stage an armed coup, the fears, actions, and impulses of the characters who inhabit *Y* are absurd yet entirely human. And it's for this very reason that when *Lost*, that mad-hatter puree of *Survivor*, *Twin Peaks*, and *Scooby-Doo* was foundering in season two—or maybe the right word is *sucking*—one of the show's creators, Damon Lindelof, did the unthinkable: He took Vaughan, a virtual unknown in Hollywood, into a dark cave somewhere beneath Malibu and opened the creaky old book of *Lost*'s secrets. The effect felt almost immediate. Vaughan, now a producer, brought the show levity, weirdness, and political verve. Yet the scenarios, no matter how far-fetched or fantastic, still felt somewhat possible. It was everything that Vaughan had been doing while writing in near anonymity—first for *X-Men* and *Spider-Man*, and then for his own mind-tweaking comics, like *Ex Machina*, about a superhero politician in post-9/11 New York. "I usually dream up a dozen or so profoundly stupid 'high concepts' for stories every day," says Vaughan, a thirty-two-year-old Cleveland native. "When one is so bad that I can't seem to shake it after a few weeks, it usually means I have no choice but to write about it, often because that lame high concept is a way for me to explore something that makes me confused or furious about the world."

Following his success with *Lost*, Vaughan has been fully co-opted by Hollywood. He adapted *Y* for the big screen, and *Ex Machina* and *Runaways*, another graphic novel, about kids who find out their parents are supervillains, are next.

Like the conclusion of *Lost*, which Lindelof and cocreator Carlton Cuse have already sketched out, Vaughan has written his career arc—his twenties dedicated to comics, his thirties to film and television, and his forties, hopefully, to novels. "I'd love to work with prose. I feel I haven't earned that yet, but I'd like to end up there eventually," he says.

Lindelof imagines something similar. "I've been in this town a long time, and Vaughan is one of the only writers I've met who writes purely for himself. That being said, his vision is so unpredictable, he's likely to conjure up one of those *Being John Malkovich* game-changing scripts that sort a fries your brain and then wins the frigging Oscar."

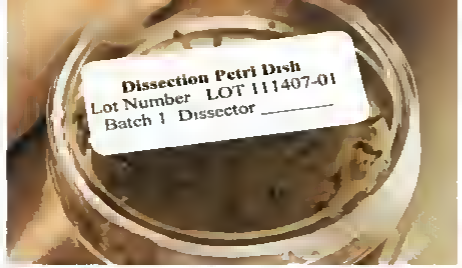
What Lindelof is talking about is a plot that is so absurd and fantastic that it rings oddly true, much like Vaughan's career.





The Persistent Primitive Dream of an Implacable Scientist and His Army of Mosquitoes

For decades scientists have been chasing a genetically engineered vaccine that would prevent the one million deaths that occur from malaria every year. **Stephen Hoffman** thinks he's found a better one—in the mosquitoes themselves. By JASON FAGONE





Once the mosquitoes are irradiated they are placed in petri dishes and sent to another room, where workers pull off their heads to reach the parasites—the vaccine [redacted]

SO YOU LIVE IN A HOT PLACE. It swarms with *Anopheles* mosquitoes. Indonesia. Venezuela. Ghana. Florida, thirty years from now, after global warming has pushed the mosquitoes north. You work outdoors in construction. Water pools in the dirt and mosquitoes breed in the stagnant water. Today the job's running late, after dusk. This is when the mosquitoes feed. A female pricks your arm, draws a blood meal. In exchange, she sends a dozen or so comma-shaped parasites down her salivary glands and into your body.

These parasites are genetic heirs to bugs as old as the primordial ooze. When they enter the body, they are immature little parasites: sporozoites. They have already had sex inside the mosquito; they need only to divide. For this, they find a warm, meaty place—your liver—and penetrate the liver cells they find there. Over the course of a week, each single sporozoite becomes an army of thirty thousand. Then the army hatches into the bloodstream, expanding exponentially. Your blood is now frothing with a billion copies of *Plasmodium falciparum*. If you don't take an antimalarial compound, all bets are off. Fever, chills, delirium, coma, death.

It turns out, though, that there is a way to disrupt the life cycle of the parasite. If a scientist zaps one of these mosquitoes with gamma radiation, the parasites inside it become weakened. If this irradiated mosquito bites you, the parasites travel to your liver, same as before. But now they just sit there. They don't cause you any harm, because they never multiply into an army or hatch into your blood. And yet the parasites—as the scientist can't help but notice—are still *alive*, meaning that, in theory, they're capable of priming an immune response. Which is how vaccines have worked for more than two hundred years, going all the way back to Edward Jenner's discovery that when he scraped some fluid from a cowpox blister into a cut on a little boy's arm, that boy was protected against smallpox.

But how can the scientist be sure that the things inside this live mosquito—these shocked, "attenuated" parasites—could truly provide protection against malaria?

If the scientist is Stephen Hoffman, he takes a small can and fills it with three hundred irradiated mosquitoes. He inverts the can, placing the mesh lid against his bare forearm, and a cloth over his arm to simulate night. He begins to feel a tickling sensation. Three thousand bites later, he withdraws the can. He has "vaccinated" himself. Then, two weeks later, he repeats the process, only with *infectious* mosquitoes instead of benign ones, and waits.

IN HIS THIRTY-YEAR CAREER in tropical medicine, twenty-one of those in crisp Navy whites, Hoffman, sixty, has always been a dreamer. He trudged through the Colombian jungle while in medical school in search of a witch doctor and indigenous salves. Years later he traveled to the remote Indonesian island of Flores, rigging up a twelve-volt battery to a field incubator so he could test the native strains of malaria for resistance to drugs. He escaped death twice: first when a bout of typhoid fever in Ecuador roasted his body for days like a self-basting turkey, then again fifteen years later, when he and his wife walked away from a plane crash in rural Kenya, where they had been studying malaria in indigenous people. Yet he didn't put the can to his arm out of some sense of romance or dare. He did it because he had already tried to make and test a vaccine using more mainstream methods, and he had failed.

During the eighties at the Naval Medical Research Institute in Bethesda, Maryland, Hoffman's job was to make a malaria vaccine for marines deployed abroad. The era of genetic engineering was dawning, and Hoffman and his colleagues spliced and cloned loops of DNA. Once they had created a "recombinant" vaccine they liked, they shot it into their bodies, then used the can and the mesh and the cloth to give themselves a chaser full of parasites.

Two weeks later, Hoffman was speaking at a medical conference when, in midsentence, he felt a wave of coldness snap through his limbs, deep and sharp, and he lost control of his body. He staggered to a chair and sat down, his teeth chattering uncontrollably. This was a malarial "rigor," his body's vain attempt to boil away the parasite now bursting his red blood cells.

For years afterward, Hoffman kept trying to refine the recombinant vaccine. As part of his efforts he also began experimenting with irradiated parasites. Scientists had known since the seventies that irradiated parasites were good at juicing the immune system to go on the attack. You could use them in the lab as tools to learn about the human body's response to infection. But what you couldn't do was use the parasites themselves to make a vaccine. Too impractical. Too primitive.

At least that was the scientific consensus. But Hoffman had chafed against consensus before. Back in the early eighties, when an alarming number of his patients in a Jakarta, Indonesia, hospital began dying from severe typhoid fever, Hoffman came up with a new cure—one that seemed foolish to most. But he and his colleagues went forward with it anyway, designed a study and got the data published, the treatment went on to become the new standard, virtually eliminating mortality for a disease that killed tens of thousands of people every year in Indonesia.

Now, years later, Hoffman was on the verge of another heresy. From 1989 to 1999, he had repeatedly dragged out the can and the mesh and the irradiated mosquitoes for ten military volunteers and himself. And of the eleven test subjects "vaccinated" with irradiated parasites, ten were completely protected from malaria. Hoffman included.

Hoffman looked over his data. It had been more than a decade since he'd begun work on the military vaccine, and it still seemed years away. Yet the success rate from the irradiated mosquitoes was more than 90 percent. Was it crazy to think that the missing vaccine had been there all along?

IN A WORD, YES. There were so many potential pitfalls that it was hard to know where to start. For one thing, it was a question of money. Any funding for Hoffman's radical idea would have to be diverted from the grant stream of someone else's experimental vaccine, and it wasn't at all clear if that would be wise. As even Hoffman admitted, the genetically engineered vaccines did show some protective effects, the next generation of the old military vaccine, the one that had failed to protect Hoffman, has since proven to be between 35 and 66 percent effective in tests and could be on the market by 2011.

But this was merely the prologue to the case against Hoffman. Because even if you granted his two key arguments—one, that his approach was quick and could therefore get a vaccine to market in years and not decades, and two, that his approach could achieve unheard-of effectiveness—there were huge practical obstacles.

Vaccines are made inside gleaming sterile facilities manned by robots and computers. Hoffman's vaccine would have to be made inside mosquitoes. It would be like baking a pie in a cow. How would you extract it? By hand? With a little needle, one by one, mosquito by mosquito? And how would you separate the parasites from the surrounding mosquito goo—the "contaminating material"? ("All these irradiated mosquitoes that I was bitten by, and others, they were loaded with bacteria and fungi," Hoffman says.) And even assuming you could do all that, how could you do it fast enough to make the one hundred million doses per year it would take to blanket Asia and Africa with a cure? Hoffman, for all these reasons and more, was a doubter himself, at first. He used to say, "You'd need an insectary the size of Texas."

Yet Hoffman began to see the obstacles as a goad. He retired in 2001 and joined Craig Venter, one of the pioneers of the human genome, at his company, Celera Genomics. It didn't last long, as Venter was soon forced out of his own company, but it was long enough to gain an appreciation for the value of staking out a bold claim and holding yourself to getting it done. By 2002, when Hoffman presented his study on irradiated parasites at a scientific conference and received a less than enthusiastic response—"You could have heard a pin drop"—he was ready.

The irradiated parasites worked. That was the good news. Now he just had to prove he could manufacture them—in bulk.

SANARIA'S CORPORATE headquarters is on the second floor of a glassy office building in Rockville, Maryland. The reception area is astonishingly bare, the carpet dotted with forlorn stains, a sticker on the copier says MALARIA SUCKS. "As you can see," Hoffman jokes, "we didn't put much money into the decor."

Instead, the money—the bulk of a $293 million grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation via the PATH Malaria Vaccine Initiative—has gone into a suite of twenty-two rooms behind a whitish keypad door just down the hall from the reception area. As you walk down the hospital-bright corridor and peer right and left into the rooms, you can see exactly what the money has bought: a ton of little blue booties for the Sanaria factory workers and white lab coats and lunch-lady hairnets and giant silver chemical hoods and boxy silver portals that connect each room and pass the factory's "product"—the vaccine-in-progress—from one room to the next.

The process is balletic, a dance of precision movements choreographed by Kim Lee Sim, Sanaria's [*continued on page 189*]

JON FAVREAU, 27, SPEECHWRITER

Fresh out of college just in time to make history



On the night of the New Hampshire primary in January a young man of twenty-six stood at the back of the crowd in the Nashua High gym and watched his boss deliver a speech conceding defeat to Hillary Clinton in the day's election. And even though his boss, Barack Obama, had lost, Jon Favreau couldn't help but smile. Obama had won big in Iowa just five days before, sending the Clinton campaign into a death spiral, but Hillary's surprising comeback meant that any notions of putting her away quickly were now dispelled. This would be a long, bloody fight for the nomination. Yet they all smiled. Had there ever been a more triumphal concession speech ever?

And then the senator got to the emotional heart of the speech, the part when he recognized that nothing this big is easy. "For when we have faced down impossible odds, when we've been told we're not ready or that we shouldn't try or that we can't, generations of Americans have responded with a simple creed that sums up the spirit of a people. Yes we can."

Speeches claiming victory are never as interesting as those conceding defeat, because people are never more interesting than when they lose. In any case, neither Favreau nor his cowriters Adam Frankel and Ben Rhodes had been expecting to have to concede anything that evening. But things change quickly. After consulting with Obama for about half an hour—Obama talked, Favreau typed notes—they decided to reprise the hopeful refrain of "Yes, we can," which had been the slogan of Obama's 2004 senate race in Illinois. And at that moment a mere presidential campaign was transformed into a movement, coalesced around three simple words.

He is too busy to read much. "I'm embarrassed to say that's since college"—Favreau graduated from Holy Cross in 2003—"I've been so busy speechwriting for Kerry and then Barack that I haven't been reading all the good literary stuff I used to read back in the day." As for speechcraft, while he says the speeches of Bobby Kennedy are his favorites, he also says Peggy Noonan is his all-time favorite speechwriter. He cites Ronald Reagan's Pointe du Hoc speech marking the fortieth anniversary of D-day as his favorite of hers, and in Noonan's sugary epic you can hear the faint echo of Barack Obama talking about his grandfather.

Favreau also says he has greatly admired the writing of Michael Gerson, who was President Bush's main speechwriter for five years, especially his address to the joint session of Congress after the September 11 attacks. Gerson returns the admiration. One night in New Hampshire, he sought out Favreau at a campaign rally and introduced himself to talk shop.

And Favreau is right. Gerson's speech for Bush that September 20 was one of the great speeches in American history. But it must be noted here that with that speech the discord between speech and speaker has never been more pronounced for we have come to know that Gerson's boss never fully grasped the power of words. With an exalting script, Gerson could make George W. Bush sound like Winston Churchill for an hour. But it is Jon Favreau's task and his gift that he is able to make his boss—a fellow who has been known to write a sentence or two on his own—sound like Barack Obama.

—MARK WARREN

How to Fix the Future: Algae Oil

It's plentiful, it's homegrown, and it could help clean up the environment while powering America—every light, car, plane, and factory in it

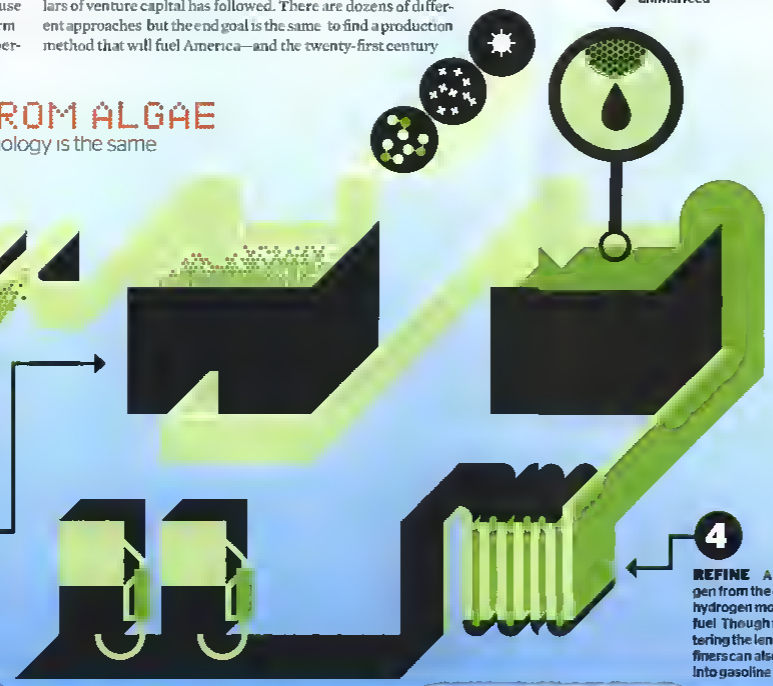
By MERYL ROTHSTEIN Illustrations by Lamosca

Forget wind power or solar power or all the other promising but frustratingly incremental solutions to America's energy crisis. The answer, instead, could be algae. It's plentiful and, like corn and soybeans, can be processed into oil and gas to power our factories, cars, and airplanes. But unlike ethanol, oil made from algae won't compete with the food supply. And because algae can grow off a power plant's carbon emissions and greenhouse gases, it can help solve, rather than exacerbate, global warming. According to some estimates, by dedicating just 2 percent of its land mass to algae production, America could meet all of its energy needs.

The U.S. government abandoned its algae-as-fuel research program in 1996 because it didn't think it could ever get the price competitive with petroleum oil. But with oil prices now far higher and global warming an ever-increasing concern, interest in algae oil is back, and tens of millions of dollars of venture capital has followed. There are dozens of different approaches, but the end goal is the same: to find a production method that will fuel America—and the twenty-first century.

HOW TO MAKE OIL FROM ALGAE

While the specific methods vary, the basic biology is the same



1 PICK A STRAIN Algae naturally produces oil as a way to store chemical energy. Companies begin by selecting from more than 60,000 strains and then growing the algae. Some strains are more productive or efficient, others thrive better in different regions or climates. Another option is to splice and breed new varieties.

2 GROW THE ALGAE Small amounts of algae are then put into a tank with water and nutrients similar to those in household fertilizer. Typically the algae is now exposed to sunlight, whereupon it rapidly reproduces and undergoes photosynthesis, converting carbon dioxide into sugar. The cell then metabolizes the sugar into lipids, or oil. The cell's cavity fills with as much as 60 percent of its weight in oil.

3 EXTRACT THE OIL Some companies press the algae like olives, physically squeezing the oil out. Others apply compressed carbon dioxide, which vaporizes the lipids until the pressure is lowered and the oil recondenses away from the remaining cell. Other methods include solvents that remove the lipids, or sonic waves that burst the algae and cause the oil to spill out. The remaining parts of the algae cells can be used in other products, including animal feed.

4 REFINE A catalyst removes oxygen from the oil and replaces it with hydrogen molecules, making diesel fuel. Though more expensive by altering the length of carbon chains, refiners can also convert the algae oil into gasoline and jet fuel.

THE METHODS

Everyone knows you can produce energy from algae. The question is how to do it most efficiently. Here are four of the most innovative contenders.



>>OPEN PONDS

The cheapest and quickest way to grow algae is also the riskiest. The shallow pools get great sun exposure and have little overhead costs, but they leave algae vulnerable to temperature changes, animals, and competing algae strains. HR BioPetroleum sidesteps these risks by growing algae strains first in sterile, transparent outdoor tubes before transferring them to open saltwater ponds for a day or two—long enough to flourish and produce plenty of oil but not long enough to be contaminated. HR BP thinks its method is the only way to mass-produce algae oil at a reasonable cost, and Shell agrees. The oil company partnered with HR BP last December to begin construction on a pilot facility on the Kona coast of Hawaii. HR BP thinks it can scale up production to open a commercial facility capable of making more than one million gallons of oil a year as early as 2011.



>>HANGING GARDENS

There's a six-thousand-square-foot greenhouse filled with hanging plastic bags of green algae slush at Valcent's El Paso plant. The setup's purpose: expose the algae to as much sunlight as possible without the risk of contamination. Though much more expensive than growing algae in open ponds, Valcent believes its system is far more efficient because it can maximize oil output by precisely controlling the temperature and chemical composition of the algae solution. Valcent is perfecting its technology as it prepares to license it to outside biofuel companies, possibly as early as this spring. Its target is a system that is self-sustaining, with the algae increasing 50 percent in size every twenty-four hours.



>>DARK FERMENTATION

Most scientists believe photosynthesis is the key to algae oil. Solazyme sees it as the problem. Algae can convert sunlight into chemical energy, but not nearly as efficiently as other materials—industrial wastes, switchgrass, low-grade molasses—can. So Solazyme designed a process that lets algae feed in the dark on input biomass rather than sunlight, cutting down the conversion process from weeks to days. The company's end-product diesels meet the same standards as nonalgal diesels, and it expects their price to be on par in two to three years. Until then, the company, which signed a development agreement with Chevron this year, will continue to clock miles in its algae-powered cars, standard vehicles purchased straight off the lot.



>>SYNTHETIC ALGAE

Most algae producers focus on diesel—not only is it cheaper to produce, but it burns cleaner and more efficiently than gasoline. But sensing that America's conversion to diesel could come slowly or not at all, Sapphire Energy has used synthetic biology to make algae cells that automatically produce carbon chains nearly identical to those found in gasoline. Sapphire's gasoline emits as much carbon as petroleum, but because algae consumes atmospheric carbon, Sapphire claims its system is carbon neutral. In September, Bill Gates's investment company added an undisclosed amount to the more than $100 million Sapphire has raised, making it one of the best-funded algae start-ups. In three to five years, Sapphire expects to produce at least ten thousand barrels of gaaa day.

THE LAST BROKEN HEART

For eternity, once a heart cell died from a heart attack or heart disease, it was gone forever. Until Hina Chaudhry figured out how to make new ones.

By LISA TADDEO





If Chaudhry's heart repair technique is a success it could save millions of lives lost to heart disease the leading cause of death in America

First thing that happens when you have a heart attack, an unlucky part of your heart turns white. The blood's stopped pumping to that spot, so it becomes pink-speckled bloodlessness, coarse and cool like grapefruit gelatin.

This is the moment when, if they could think, these heart cells in this new poor part of town would go, "Well *shit*." Mortal things have a godly way of knowing when they'll die.

Next comes the back-alley bruise of organ death. The cells turn from white to black, all shitted up like a body pit in a war, two weeks after. Suddenly, soldier, this part of your heart is dead, only it's still in your body, attached to the good section—the 90210 ventricle—and the good part is smirking, it's saying, "Come on, rebuild yourself, man!"

But the dead part can't fix itself. And the healthy part can't throw it a bloody rope. So the whole heart begins to die—650 000 American deaths a year.

But now look here, a woman. She is a pretty lady of Pakistani heritage who highlights her soccer-mom layers, which you don't expect from a lab-worn doctor-lady. And she's got ideas. Wild ones. Hina Chaudhry believes she can do what the body can't: fix the dead parts.

TO UNDERSTAND what Hina Chaudhry thinks she's right about, you have to first understand what she thinks everyone else has been wrong about. For years, stem cells were this scream of a promise. A kitten-faced controversy that was going to be worth all the protest. The idea was that since they could become any cell in the human body, you could inject stem cells into diseased hearts and they would regenerate the dying meat. They were the bloody rope, the unholy cure.

But legions of stem-cell-injected mice later, the promise is just promise. The problem, according to Chaudhry, forty-one, a cardiologist at Mount Sinai Medical Center in New York, is you take stem cells from bone marrow and no matter how young those cells are, they're still destined to become bone marrow cells. "No matter what you hear, the truth is that all the clinical trials of stem-cell transplantation into the heart have not really shown a significant benefit."

Chaudhry says it was women's intuition. The holy-shit solution. It came to her during a seminar at UPenn when she was twenty-nine. They were discussing fruit-fly genes. How the head segment knows it's going to form a head and how the tail segment knows it's going to be a tail. "I just had this sudden realization that heart cells don't divide after birth in any mammal. They divide in the embryo, but they stop after birth," she says. "So I thought, That's it! We have to go back and study the basics of *why* and *when* heart cells stop dividing.' If they could do that—figure out what causes heart-cell division to turn off—then perhaps they could find a way to turn it back *on*.

The switch, in this case, is a gene called cyclin A2. It's a key regulator of cell division in all mammals, and also the only such regulator that gets turned completely off in the heart after birth.

Chaudhry started with mice. She took the cyclin A2 gene and linked it with part of another gene that would keep cyclin A2 active in the postbirth game of life. A new combo gene—a transgene—was born. She then injected this transgene into a mouse's egg cell to produce offspring that had the transgene already integrated. In about six months she and her team had engineered a whole line of genetically modified (transgenic) mice.

People told her, *Fine, you made a transgenic race of mice, but you can't make transgenic humans.*

And that's right. You can't wait for humans to procreate new healthy humans. You have to cure the humans now, today. Yesterday.

But what you *can* do is infect a human with a virus. A deactivated virus with the mighty cyclin A2 strapped to its back.

It's intelligent promotion. It's a rockin' new club, the heart of the future, where no more of this silent-gene bullshit will be tolerated. Wallflowers move to the back of the line.

CHAUDHRY'S LAB LOOKS LIKE a high school chemistry department, all the old beakers and petri dishes and the scampering mice and rats in the cloudy plastic cages. It was in this lab last year that Chaudhry and her team were inundated with rodents. Injecting them with her cyclin A2 virus. Giving them heart attacks.

A rat would get taped down, his spindly limbs, with thin strips of masking tape. He'd be heavily sedated, breathing through a rat ventilator in quick, even rodent breaths. Then a surgeon would delicately shave his white chest to pink, baste him in iodine, and snip his chest open to expose the work zone. It's just like in your own chest, and it's ghastly—slimmy purples and coral carnations—it makes you realize how violently life has to work to live, this dime-sized rat heart beating like hard living.

The surgeon then ligates the tube, cuts off the blood supply. Ligate the tube, sweep the leg. It's the same thing as in humans. The affected side turns white, then black, then dies. The pale-hearted joins the departed within three months. But if he was one of Chaudhry's lucky test-case bastards who received the miracle vaccine, he'd recover. His heart would begin to cure itself.

And the little rat hearts did cure themselves. More than a hundred of them, fighting back heart disease, challenging nature.

"The heart still takes a hit, but now it significantly recovers," explains Chaudhry, her eyes sparkling with innovation. The normal ejection fraction, the amount of blood the heart pumps in each beat, is 55 to 70 percent. After a heart attack, that rate can fall to 40 percent and below, which is the danger zone that can lead to failure. But Chaudhry's been able to keep it above 42 percent in mice and 50 percent in rats. "Our hope is to keep the ejection fraction above the threshold that would lead to heart failure, and we're confident that we can do that with this therapy," she says.

They're working on pigs right now, up the food chain of test mammals. In as few as six months, says Chaudhry, they'll have their early results. "If it works in pigs, it will work in humans," she says. No matter how jaded you are, it's exciting when someone says something bold.

"*My* hope and *my* expectation," says Chaudhry, "is that it's worked in two small-animal models, and I really believe it's going to work in humans. I can say we will save many lives, I can't say yet how many."

Her idea was laughed at, at first. In part because she was young and a woman, she says. But now the medical world is sitting up, taking notes.

Chaudhry was recruited to Mount Sinai's Cardiovascular Institute by the director of Mount Sinai Heart, Dr. Valentin Fuster, and the medical center's Cardiovascular Research Center director, Dr. Roger Hajjar. She calls them the two greatest visionaries in the cardiac world. Along with their chosen one, this bright many-schooled angel, they are going to make Mount Sinai the leading thinker in the heart world. "We've had no therapies to reverse heart failure—to make a diseased heart normal again," says Hajjar. "This therapy may finally do that."

Before doing clinical testing, Chaudhry needs FDA approval, which could take up to two years. Then the short-term plan will be to develop an injection to be used a week after a heart attack occurs. Long-term, Chaudhry says, her hope is to "design a drug that might possibly be taken orally to help create new cells in diseased hearts."

In the meantime, her team is making more of the virus in order to have enough to test the pigs, then to cure the humans.

How confident is she?

"*Very* confident."

Like, does this mean you can *cure* heart disease?

She's hesitant. Nobody wants to say they can defeat the industrialized world's number-one killer. Nobody wants to make promises about life, or quantify salvation. But she fervently believes she's got a shot.

The work is hard, and she stays at the lab some nights past midnight, but she's making inroads long as small intestines. And even though she has that medical-school-taught closed-offness, she's still human, and beyond her large brain and shimmery girl-eyed dedication, she's also got a personal motivation. The *E!* biography backstory. Her seventy-two-year-old mother has coronary disease and stents in her heart. Her father, who died last year, had his first quadruple bypass thirty-four years ago. "I think of all the kids whose dads had heart attacks and died, and how lucky I was that mine didn't," she says.

And that's really what it's about, when you remove the rats on the table and the textbook gene stuff and the believers and the nonbelievers and all the FDA approvals in between. In the end it's about someone you love living, instead of dying. The holy-shit prophecy. This is serious, as a heart attack.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY BRENT C. ARK

INNOVATIONS

SELF-MENDING RUBBER

Imagine a flat tire that repairs itself. A basketball that never goes flat. Children's toys that can't be broken. All of these things could one day be possible thanks to the advance of synthetic rubber that self-heals like Silly Putty. Unlike the large molecules in conventional rubber, the material invented by French scientists Ludwik Leibler and Philippe Cordier is made of smaller molecules joined by hydrogen bonds. When the material is cut, molecules that were separated seek out new partners. When the two pieces are pressed together again, lonely molecules bond, reinstating the integrity of the material.

While scientists and bloggers dream up amazing applications, such as one day using the material to mend broken bones and ligaments, Leibler and Cordier are teaming up with French chemical company Arkema to find immediate applications. By mixing their material with asphalt, they're creating roads that won't crack, which will likely be available in a year. They're also developing a harder, shinier material that could be used for unbreakable household items like vases or dishes. What's next? Well, use your imagination.

PHOTOGRAPHY SPENCER HEYERON

True Believer

The Internet of the future will be smarter, more focused, and more fun, because **Benjamin Palmer** likes it that way

By TYLER CABOT

There's an irony there. Benjamin Palmer looks nothing like a corporate savior. His skin is wan, his hair greasy, like he's been up all night, every night. Yet Palmer, thirty-four, is the hipster geek large companies like Nike, HP, Mars, and Volkswagen call when they need to figure out how to talk to the kids. And the reason is that the Internet is Palmer's bitch. He knows how it *works*—both technically and upon us. And he grasps why some sites and videos go viral and others flatline. So companies come to him and ask a simple question: How can you use the Internet to transform us?

Sometimes that means making an amazing application or Web site like Burger King's subservientchicken.com, where you can command a man dressed up in a chicken suit to do whatever you want. *Do a handstand. Do the running man.* It's simple, idiotic, and was an immediate success in 2004, garnering more than a billion hits. A few years later, Palmer's growing company, the Barbarian Group, rented a special high-speed camera, built a cannon, and shot videos of a contractor blowing stuff up with cans of Milwaukee's Best Light, Miller's economy beer (milbestlight.com). The demographic the brand was looking to impress—poor drunk college kids—loved it. Another brand made cool. Barbarian did the same thing this spring for CNN.com by adding an application to the news site that allows users to buy T-shirts of the non sequitur headlines at the bottom of its video screens. MAN LOSES 550 LBS., GAINS BRIDE.

The key, according to Palmer, is that on the Web, advertising can't be just about yelling your message louder and clearer with more pixels and colors. "You're a brand, make yourself fucking useful," he says. The ad, if not the brand, should at least appear to make someone's life richer or better. That means making people laugh or play, making people like a brand and want to share a brand experience.

All this comes back to Palmer's mission in starting the company seven years ago with three buddies in his Boston apartment. They called one another barbarians and they set out to conquer the Web. Now Barbarian has offices in three cities, eighty employees. And the reason it's worked is that Palmer's a true believer. He didn't set out to make advertisements; he wanted to use the money and reach he gains from advertising "to give people what they want." Which is a Web experience that could only come from somebody who loves the medium even more than we do.

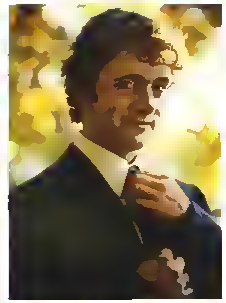




According to Palmer, for a brand to succeed online, it needs to act like the person you imagine it to be. In these cases, a guy in a chicken suit (Burger King) and a guy blowing stuff up (Milwaukee's Best)

MICHAEL SHEEN, 39, ACTOR

He doesn't just bring characters to life. He re-creates history



It takes stones, playing a public figure in a movie. You've got the inevitable side-by-side comparisons on YouTube, the inevitable harping about how you got it all wrong, the inevitable What was Rich Little busy? But we live in extraordinary times, and we need extraordinary actors to bring them to life, and Michael Sheen's most famous until now for his twin turns as Tony Blair in 2003's *The Deal* and 2006's *The Queen*, is setting a new standard for playing men who make history.

To wit: This month Sheen headlines his first major American film, playing celebrity journalist David Frost in Ron Howard's *Frost/Nixon*. Frost's televised interviews with Richard Nixon aired over four nights in 1977 and attracted more than forty million viewers, and the film's nearly verbatim reenactments of those meetings give Sheen and his costar Frank Langella ample opportunity to chew scenery. Sheen resists and cedes the spotlight to Langella's barn-burning portrayal of Tricky Dick. It's just as well: Sheen is too busy carrying the movie and channeling Frost's nervous, quiet desperation to grandstand for the camera.

It's a tough gig, re-creating moments that are etched in the public consciousness, but time and again Sheen has proven himself up to it. And it's a good thing, too, because we need more actors like Sheen—men who understand our world and have the stones to do something about it.

—RICHARD DORMENT

See Sheen in "Scenes from Movies Not Yet Made" on page 130

Omer Fast and the News

How one man takes the history of our time and makes it art (as if art mattered)

By BUDDY KITE

It's not clear what kind of artist Omer Fast is. He doesn't like the term "video artist"; even the term "artist" makes him cringe. So the thirty-six-year-old Fast, who was born in Jerusalem, educated in the United States, and currently resides in Berlin, finds that the best way to describe his occupation to new acquaintances is just to say he makes short films, which is admittedly a misdirection.

On the surface, his work looks familiar. There are often props, actors, scripts, and sit-down interviews. He uses 35mm film and repurposes CNN footage. But a few moments into a work like *Spielberg's List* (2003), in which he interviews Poles in Krakow who worked as extras in *Schindler's List*, it becomes apparent that the way he's using all those elements is different. By turning common nonfiction genres—the newscast, the online video, the documentary—upside down and shaking out all the loose change, Fast conveys profound feelings about our complex relationship with contemporary media. "It's basically speaking through the medium that you consume," he explains. "It's not so much critiquing it. That's just boring when *that's* all it's about. We all know that TV is bad for us. blah, blah."



In *Looking Pretty for God*, child actors perform memorized interviews Fast, left, conducted with morticians

Because his subjects are often topical, the results can be unnerving. At this year's Whitney Biennial, the dazed and weighted faces exiting the dark screening room of *The Casting* testified to that. In the film (which won the museum's Bucksbaum Award—essentially the Whitney's Best in Show), a real U.S. Army sergeant recounts two incidents: the accidental shooting of an Iraqi and a romantic encounter with a German woman. The stories are intertwined seamlessly in a script that is acted out by performers in silent tableaux on split screens. The effect is unsettling, germane, mesmerizing—without ever being easy or ironic.

"One thing that's always been important to me," Fast says, "is that people actually enjoy watching my work." You can see Fast's *CNN Concatenated* on YouTube, along with excerpts from some of his other work. His latest projects—*Take a Deep Breath* and *Looking Pretty for God*—were shown this fall in Chicago and Liverpool.

SETH JONES, 36

The question was so obvious, nobody thought to ask it. How does terrorism end?



Seth Jones has the answer to the million dollar question.

Through his work as an analyst for the Rand Corporation, he has found that 40 percent of terrorist groups are defeated by police and intelligence operations. Forty-three percent end because they give up violence and join the political process. Only 7 percent end as a result of military force.

It's incredible, really. Ever since 9/11, thousands of America's best minds have been grappling with the question of how to fight terrorism. General David Petraeus has come up with some of the best answers. Others appear in Lieutenant Colonel John Nagl's influential study of the guerrilla wars in Malaya and Vietnam, *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife*. But until Seth Jones, nobody actually sought an empirical answer. Nobody crunched the numbers.

For a new book called *How Terrorist Groups End: Lessons for Countering al Qa'ida*, Jones studied 648 terrorist groups and accumulated overwhelming evidence that the United States may be about to make the same mistakes in Afghanistan that were made in Iraq. "We've seen decreasing levels of support for our operations in Afghanistan," he says, "and part of the reason is civilian casualties from air strikes."

Military force is often just too blunt an instrument, Jones says. History proves that the clearest path to success is using local police and intelligence agencies that have deep local knowledge. This is the approach we slowly adopted in Iraq, with strategies like integrating former Sunni insurgents into the police forces in Anbar Province. But the problems in Pakistan and Afghanistan may be even more complex. Our hunt for Osama bin Laden, for example, has been compromised by long-standing ties between Pakistan and the insurgent groups in tribal regions that Pakistan uses as proxies in its conflict with India. And of course another problem is our refusal to work with a country that actually helped us with the invasion of Afghanistan in 2001. "Our unwillingness to talk to Iran on any level is extremely counterproductive."

In fact, the underlying problem with American strategy in the war against terrorism is America's historical reluctance to engage on a deep level with foreign governments, as evidenced by the Bush administration's decision to rotate more than fifteen different senior diplomats and military commanders through Iraq and Afghanistan in seven years. "This is the death knell of any counterinsurgency," Jones says. "If you do not have the government you're going to lose."

—JOHN H. RICHARDSON



Jason Rohrer

[*continued from page* t64] consulting, occasional speaking fees, and monthly checks from his "patron," a wealthy software industry figure who has taken a liking to his games.

To some extent, Rohrer fits the profile of a game maker: a computer dork who is more seduced by comic books and movies than by dreams of becoming a legendary hacker or a dot-com millionaire. And Rohrer, who studied artificial intelligence at Cornell, is a dork through and through. But even within the small yet growing dork vanguard of indie game-makers—a vanguard that includes Rohrer and Rod Humble and a guy called "Cactus" and Ian Bogost, an associate professor of digital media at Georgia Tech, and Jonathan Blow, who pumped $120,000 of his life savings into Braid, a game about the nature of time and existence and quantum mechanics—Rohrer is "pretty fringe," according to Bogost. The other indie guys don't live in meadows.

But there's a deep logic to the way he lives. If he didn't live this way he couldn't make the games he makes. By carefully constructing an alternate reality bit by bit, Rohrer has been able to make the same creative leap that many artists have made in the past. His games start with an emotion, an observation about the poignancy of a certain set of trade-offs inherent to being alive, Rohrer then figures out how to abstract and encode these trade-offs using math and images. This is why Rohrer's games, while sharing a common aesthetic—often pixelated, retro cute, allusive to video-game hits of the past—feel so different from one another.

At dinner one night he asks his wife if she thinks it would be fun to be immortal—she says she thinks it would get boring—so he makes a game. Immortality, in which you're this little stick figure who has to build a tower to the heavens: the game grants you the powers of immortality, then makes you yearn to have those powers taken away. He's surfing online and comes across that YouTube video of the "Don't tase me, bro" guy and he's so freaked out by the tyranny of the police that he cries, and when he's done crying, he codes a game called Police Brutality that puts you in the room with the "Don't tase me" dude and challenges you to organize an unarmed insurrection. He makes a Super Mario Brothers–type game called Gravitation about his relationship with the kid in the meadow, his five-year-old son, Mez.

And it's hard to see the art in these games unless you play them and struggle with them and try to figure out what the games mean. It doesn't help to watch over his shoulder as he codes a game on his beat-down Dell laptop, in his humid home office with the peeling linoleum floor and the window overlooking the arcadian wilderness of his backyard meadow. Watch him code his latest sketch, a game about regret, and what do you see?

Tuesday there's an idea on a scrap of paper: "Mistakes you make, early on, haunt you through some game mechanic later." Thursday, there's a map of a maze. Later that day, the maze is populated with bunnies and squirrels; in the game, you have to feed the animals from a pouch full of different foods, and if you feed them the wrong food they die, and you "regret it." Rohrer adds some additional texture, the dead animals come back as "ghosts," and you can either feed them or avoid them. If you feed them they just come back later. Lesson: Regret is pointless. Move on. Friday there's a nearly completed video game. It doesn't give an inch. It doesn't tell you how to play it, how to get a high score, how to win. You have to figure that out for yourself. The game, in its own small way, is trying to reverse decades of infantilism in video games and culture, in which you get coins for doing stupid shit. It's not going to coddle *awesome job!*

And when you do figure it out, it's a tiny epiphany, and maybe you understand something about regret that you didn't understand before. You're seeing its inner workings laid out before you, yet you still can't figure out *how he's doing it*. Ian Bogost calls this "procedural rhetoric." It's the art ghost in the machine. Asking where it comes from is like asking Hemingway, *Papa, why'd you put the comma there and not there?* Papa would turn around and punch you in the nose. The game is art not because it's beautiful like a poem, but because it's as difficult to explain as a poem—some ungraspable mélange of pixels, sounds, characters, and your own brain's response. And if you don't get it? Well, you're lost. So maybe you log on to Kotaku or IndieGames.com and chide Rohrer for "this little slice of emo pie." Or maybe you really unload: "Jason Rohrer is a pretentious jerk. Now, to be an indie art-film maker, you have to be pretty pretentious. To be an indie art-game maker is another thing entirely. You have to have your head shoved so far up your own ass that you can eat your heart. Wow. Jason Rohr. I hate you."

Rohrer is trying to make art in a medium that most people *don't even think is capable of art*. He can create this space of pure freedom as artists have done in the past—isolation, introspection, ascetic poverty. But ultimately he has to send these works out into the world, and people have to respond to them. And right now the audience doesn't know what to do with them.

This is why video games need a figure like Rohrer so badly: an auteur. A person of great energy, courage, ego, and, yeah, pretentiousness—pretentiousness with a purpose—to just show up every day and sit in his broken office chair, the one held together with the rubber band and the clothespin, and read the nasty comments about him online, and laugh so hard that he almost scissors his chair into plastic confetti, and then open the coding window on his shitty laptop and conjure that image of a disapproving, cranky cultural critic, "cracking the whip in the back of my mind," before launching into work on his next game, a game that's pitching for a fight—difficult, heady, a game inspired by the philosopher W. V. Quine—a game about "consciousness and isolation and some other things I can point at desperately but cannot quite name."

On the first day of work on Regret, while Rohrer and his family are inside eating lentil soup, somebody comes tooling along Route 111 with a riding mower and cuts down a ten-foot strip of their front yard's natural meadow.

Rohrer calls the cops. "I'd like to report a serious act of vandalism," he says.

A lawn has a wound response. Most people don't know that. Cut a lawn and it emits harmful hydrocarbons, like a car. "Here we go," Rohrer says, flipping through his files. "Air Pollution and the Smell of Cut Grass. I have a scientific study." In fact, he has a whole stack left over from his 2005 court case. That year, the Village of Potsdam arraigned Rohrer for an ordinance about lawn height. Rohrer pleaded not guilty. He recruited an expert witness to testify to the salutary environmental effects of natural meadows, and he wrote a nine-page brief enumerating how the village was violating his right to free expression. The prosecution asked him if he couldn't just grow the meadow in his back yard and not in the front. Rohrer said no, that would defeat the whole point. He argued that "our ability to speak with our landscape would be drastically reduced if our desired landscape was restricted to our backyard, since very few people could see it."

And he won. The village was forced to leave his meadow alone. They couldn't have known what it meant to him, because they didn't know his history. How he'd never liked the smell of cut grass. That riding mower. Just murdering and murdering the lawn of his Bath, Ohio, home every week, on his dad's wishes. Begged his dad for a meadow. Dad said no.

Then Rohrer met his wife, Lauren Serafin in Ithaca. She was just like him: the daughter of wealthy business owners, harboring similar dreams of escape. A heart exploded. They searched a Web site listing the food co-ops across America. They crossed out the co-ops in towns with expensive real estate and landed here, Potsdam, a place where they could focus on the experiences of their lives instead of their materiality and where Rohrer could finally have his meadow, assuming he could make the people of Potsdam trust that this meadow was a legitimate and good and dutiful and logical thing and not some lazy indulgence, not a deadbeat's excuse not to mow, not an eyesore, at least not to him, because he cared about it, cared enough to carve it out and defend it, fight for it, believe in its potential, this odd form of expression he had chosen to love—the weed smells and the insect noise, the butterflies, the berries getting ripe and fat and falling and staining the ground purple, the smell of the compost pile spoiling, the apples and peppers and banana peels dissolving to mulch.

Christ, can't you see this? This lush green atmosphere dying so gorgeously all around him? And Rohrer with a laptop, sitting cross-legged in the dirt, inventing a new way of showing the world what it means to be alive? ▮

Malaria Vaccine

[*continued from page* t77] vice-president and Hoffman's wife, whom he met twenty-six years ago at a tropical-medicine conference in her native Malaysia. Sim's team breeds mosquitoes by the thousands, feeds them human blood infected with *Plasmodium falciparum*, then irradiates them. A technician pushes a button on a giant blue kiln, which fills the kiln's hearth with invisible gamma rays that singe something within the cells of the parasites. The parasites are now in limbo, alive but unable to divide. Then it's harvesting time. Workers kill the mosquitoes with an alcohol bath, quick and easy, and then, one by one, they separate the male mosquitoes from the females (males don't transmit malaria), arrange the females on microscope slides, and use needles and tweezers to pull their heads ever so delicately from their bodies. Then they isolate the salivary glands, full of the zombie parasites, and dissolve away the contaminating mosquito material. (How? "I could tell you," says Hoffman, "but then I'd have to kill you"), leaving only the zombies, irradiated and perfect and pure. In a small plastic vial less than an inch high, they appear as a clear, odorless liquid. Like water. Then the vial's placed into vaporized nitrogen for storage.

It's all so low-tech that it's easy to miss the engineering breakthroughs; many of the steps had to be invented by Hoffman's team from scratch. (For instance, because the parasites are so big relative to bacteria, Hoffman had to hire one of the world's foremost supercooling experts to build a customized cooling system.) Yet Hoffman won't apologize if it seems kind of primitive. That's the point: speed. It doesn't have to be elegant, it just has to be safe. "Anything that was not on the main path we put on blinders for," Hoffman says. He can refine it later. After. After the first key test. The one he's been dreaming about for six years.

"Is it going to work or not?" says Dr. Christian Loucq, head of the PATH Malaria Vaccine Initiative and Hoffman's partner. "That's the big question."

This is what it means to make a vaccine nobody has ever made before, using methods everybody assumed would be unworkable. It means acknowledging the risks and the probabilities of failure and the unanswered questions, even as you try to show people how you've already beaten the odds. It means standing up at scientific meetings and answering the pointed questions of the Glaxo guys. ("Well, what about the contaminating material?' Well we've solved that. 'But what about the potency?' We've solved that. 'What about the quantity?' They kept trying to shoot us down.") It means trying not to squirm in your chair as a reporter from *The New York Times* presents you with a nasty quote from a competing vaccine maker in Paris. "Even calling it a vaccine is a compliment. It is like Captain Ahab in the movie trying to kill Moby Dick with his knife." It means that at any point, Hoffman "may encounter insurmountable hurdles," according to Dr. Myron Levine, director of the Center for Vaccine Development at the University of Maryland School of Medicine and an admirer of Hoffman's progress to date. "One by one, he has addressed those hurdles so far, and in fact has been able to overcome them." Levine says. It means that before Hoffman can sell the vaccine to First World tourists and Third World governments and global public-health agencies and replenish the grant money he has burned through—before he can give the vaccine a chance to prove its worth in human tests scheduled for the United States and Africa—he has to sit around and wait. The FDA has asked for additional safety tests, which should be completed by January. Safety studies are necessary but expensive. "You have to be so assiduous," says Hoffman. "And it's really good. We cannot do harm. The Hippocratic oath and all that. But it is mind-boggling."

Sanaria is almost broke. Hoffman is dipping into his own personal funds to keep the company afloat. He still has to make payroll every month for his forty-five employees, some of whom relocated to Rockville from foreign countries seduced by the chance to work on the vaccine. In down moments it can get to Hoffman. There have been "extraordinary setbacks" in the past year; all six production runs have gone "perfectly" but before that there were major hitches, unforeseen expenses, dead parasites in the vials.

"It takes a toll," Hoffman says. "Personally."

"But it makes us better," Sim says.

Hoffman nods, seeming to draw strength from her. "But every time we do it, we get better and better."

This is what's so hard for Hoffman. His major creative leap as a scientist was to take this massive open-ended search for a malaria vaccine and redefine it as a basic engineering problem. And now he's in a position in which all his creativity has to be funneled into waking up every day and putting out a series of tiny fires before they have a chance to form a giant blaze.

And at the same time that he's struggling to veer away from worst-case scenarios, he has to plan for the best case—for human tests. In August, with funding from the National Institutes of Health, Hoffman put one of his employees on a plane to Accra, Ghana. On a separate plane, Hoffman shipped a vial of "research material"—Sanaria's irradiated parasites. The parasites were packed in a white box about the size of a minifridge, full of liquid nitrogen. When the employee landed, he retrieved the vials and checked to see if the parasites were still potent. They were. Then he took another plane and a 4x4 truck to a remote, heavily malarious region in the north of Ghana and checked the parasites a second time. Then he turned around and flew home. The vials arrived in Maryland, and Hoffman's employees tested the parasites again to make sure they were still okay, this vaccine that was never supposed to exist but exists. But exists. ▮



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Dean Kamen

[*continued from page 106*]

Back in his office, Kamen fires out explanations for why the Slingshot hasn't taken off yet. It starts with the day Deka finished the first prototype and realized—shades of the Segway—there was no real market for it. The poor people who needed it couldn't even begin to afford it, so no big corporation wanted to invest $50 million or $100 million or more to tool up a factory and take it to market. "So now you've got these things, and you go 'Wow, the kinds of companies that we do business with have to make their return. They're not going to do this.' A few of them said, 'Dean you're—'"

He stops himself before he says the word. But he knows these big corporate guys. And they're good guys, this is just an example where the great power of capitalism fails. So where do you take an idea that's not right for big companies? How about the *United Nations*? The *World Bank*? This was something he had never thought about before. What does the World Bank do? Does the World Bank loan money to poor people? Does the World Health Organization flood the Third World with doctors? Does the United Nations unite nations?

"I *absolutely* thought you could go to the United Nations or the World Bank or the World Health Organization or USAID or any of these organizations that have moral imperative and even a *legal* obligation to find the best solution to a given problem. You'd think they would be *obligated* to look at this. But they'd say 'Great, Dean, as soon as you have these in production, call me, I'm here to buy them.'"

Okay, so what about the big foundations? What about Bill Gates? "I've come to learn, a foundation makes big government look like a bunch of entrepreneurs. They make *Fortune* 500 companies to be these agile little groups."

So he talked to people like Mohammad Yunus of the Grameen Bank, who won the Nobel prize for giving microfinance loans to poor villagers so they could start small businesses. *That's* the model for the twenty-first century: rock skipping over the traditional infrastructure of telephone poles and IBM to the cell phone and the personal computer—perfect for the Slingshot. But they all said the same thing: Great, give me a hundred or a thousand machines.

So he did some field trials, putting the distiller in a village in Honduras and the Stirling in a village in Bangladesh. And they worked. *Marvelously. Magically.* He proved that. And still nobody would finance them. It makes his brain hurt. To think that 20 percent of the people alive today are perfect—more than perfect, *desperate*—customers for this beautiful technology and organizations like the UN and WHO *are so rigidly organized and their thinking is so monolithic and their model of risk and reward is so narrow that they can't conceive of taking a prototype to production even if it will save millions of lives.*

That's when he decided he was approaching the problem from the wrong angle. The cell phone became successful because the developed world wanted it, so corporations spent the billions of dollars it took to develop the technology and put transmission towers everywhere. That's what he needed. He had to find a "killer app," a way to sell the Stirling and the distiller to the developed world.

So he went searching.

"Let's take a walk," Kamen says, leading the way through the halls. His first stop is the bottom of a flight of stairs is something that looks like an ordinary vending machine, but is in fact Kamen's magical water distiller. He opens it up and points out different parts. "This is the vapor-compression distiller, this is the evaporator condenser, these are the chemical heat exchangers, and this half is the refrigeration unit." He puts a plastic water jug under a spout. "This you can fill in under half a minute, one gallon in fifteen seconds. Or a glass of water, all from the same machine. Isn't that neat?"

To get the Slingshot to the 20 percent of the world that doesn't have electricity, Kamen came up with the idea of splitting it in half. Leaving the Stirling aside, he would try to develop a market for his distiller in parts of the developing world that have electricity but not reliable clean water. There are five hundred thousand little stores in Mexico," he says. "If we can put one of these in 10 percent of them, that's enough to put it in production."

That may be the killer app for the distiller.

The next stop is just outside the back door, a parking space occupied by a little Scandinavian electric car called the Think. Kamen opens the hatch and lifts up the floor panel. Instead of a spare wheel, there's a little Stirling engine no bigger than a football. "It has a long life, low maintenance, it doesn't have an exhaust system, mufflers, you don't have to worry about the points and the plugs. To make an electric car but have that as an insurance policy may be a very attractive feature."

Without the Stirling, the Think has a battery range of sixty or seventy miles. With the Stirling, its range could be unlimited. This could be the killer app for Kamen's engine.

But alas, the Think corporation is too small to finance it. And the big car companies are too traumatized by the plunge in their markets. So now Kamen's in the process of hiring a guy to pitch it around. Maybe auto component companies will go for it. Another possibility is backup power for homes. Or a cheap way to heat swimming pools. He has more ideas, lots of ideas.

Moving down the halls, Kamen asks another engineer if he's working on the water distiller.

"I'm not working on it," the engineer answers, looking dazed and just a little bit testy. "I'm working on a paying customer's job."

Kamen moves on.

A couple of weeks later, Kamen's in a cheerful mood. Nokia kicked in $150,000 for FIRST. He has an upcoming meeting with Ratan Tata, head of India's biggest company, to talk about putting the Stirlings into Tata's little $2,500 cars. And the guy from Wal-Mart called to say that he almost missed a plane because of that Dumpliomian stamp. "Why do you have diplomatic status?" the airport security guys asked. "It's *Dumpliomatic* status," the man from Wal-Mart explained. Kamen thinks this is hilarious. "An *international incident!*" he laughs.

He climbs the stairs to the roof and gets into his helicopter. He used to dream of this when he was a kid, the idea of rising up out of the backyard and just *hovering*. When the first big check arrived, the first toy he bought was an Enstrom helicopter. Then he bought a piece of the company and redesigned the helicopter to his own specs.

As he rises above the town, and all the little houses turn into toys below him, the setting sun casts a golden light on the green hills of New Hampshire. "Isn't it *beautiful*?" he says. "It's like a magic carpet."

But wait, we need the right music. He cranks up the theme from *Star Wars*—dum, dum, *da* da! Up here, the music seems freshly rich with glory and wonder restored to its boyish exuberance. "There's something exhilarating about cheating gravity," he says.

Ten minutes later he soars over his mansion. It's on top of a hill he built with truck after truck of dirt and rock, cooled and heated by water piped from a 3.8-million gallon pond he created. He lands the helicopter on a motorized pad and steers it into a hangar built right into the house. "Isn't that neat? Nobody in the world has anything like this, not even Bill Gates."

He designed the house, too, shaping it around a three-story steamboat engine once owned by Henry Ford. He spent fifteen years rebuilding the engine himself, cutting every nut and bolt in the vast machine shop just below his living room. "Eighty-seven thousand pounds of love," he calls it. Because there's nothing so soothing as cutting a piece of steel when it's late and you can't sleep because you're trying to work out some problem in your head. Because machines are more than machines, they're a *road map* to the people who built them. They tell you what kind of *problems* they had and what they *wanted*. Just as Kamen's inventions are his own autobiography in steel—every one designed to cheat gravity, to declare independence, to make every man the king of his own empire.

He leads the way to the cupola at the top and watches the sunset, chattering happily. This is why he never got married or had children. He loves being away from everywhere, completely alone. He can watch planes land at the airport. He can watch the weather change. And it doesn't bother him that he usually comes home at nine or ten and drops into bed exhausted. It is like the private island he rarely visits, the girlfriend he rarely sees, the vacations he never takes. It's the *idea* that counts. Just knowing he has it is enough. Anyway, what should he stop doing? FIRST? Water? Power? Medical equipment? "I can't stop," he says. "As a practical matter I can't put the world on hold."

He really can't. There's just too much he wants to do. When he proved that FIRST worked, he was sure it would be in every school in the country the next year. Same with the Segway. It's 100 percent more efficient than cars, those metal boxes designed for the open road when 50 percent of the people alive live in cities. It's just *stupid*. It's lunacy. And someday, the Slingshot will go in to production, too. And one of the kids from FIRST will win the Nobel prize or cure cancer. But it takes time for an *innovation* to become a *commodity*. Because the Wright brothers flew a plane and it was a long time before frequent flier miles. You have to be patient, give the world time to catch up.

For fun he's starting to dream about something that flies. A new form of personal transportation. It will be, he says, Dumpliomian. It will empower the individual.

Some kind of helicopter?

"Not a helicopter," he says staring intently at the helicopter. "I've got a couple of ideas." He smiles, turning inward for a moment, lost in the vision of a new machine. ☐



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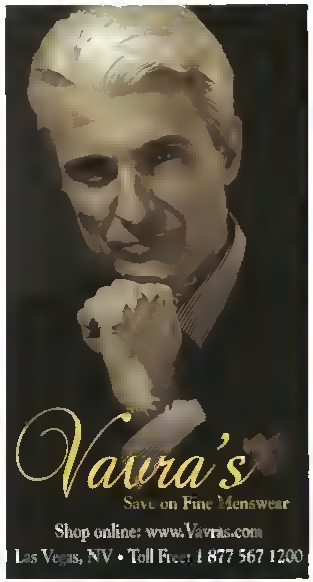
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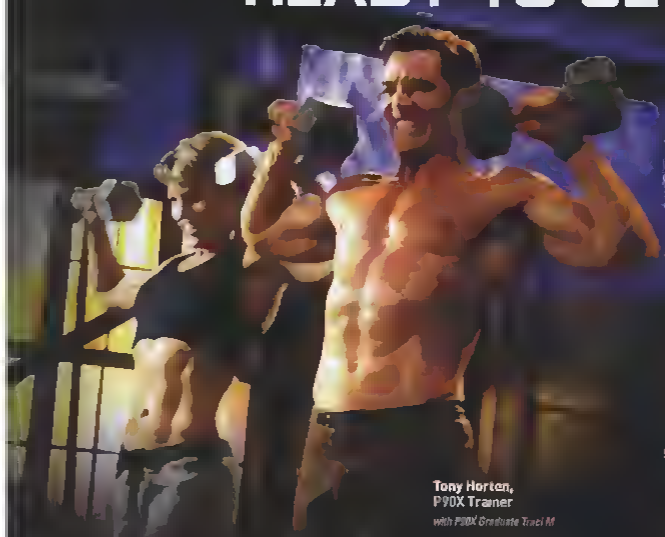
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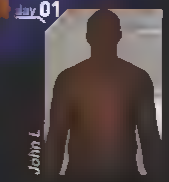
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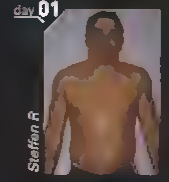
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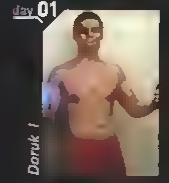


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Forgotten Inventors

The unsung men and women who changed our lives forever

BY BRIAN FRAZER



Martin Cooper (1973)
Invented excuse "Sorry, I'm losing reception" during one of first cell phone calls when his friend started telling him a dream involving Teddy Roosevelt and his ex-wife making waffles together.

Chester Pence (1871)
Came up with idea of simultaneously putting index finger and pinkie behind person's head in photo so it looked like he had devil horns.

Archibald Gips Jr. (1730)
Discovered ear could not only be used to hear things but as shelf to hold quill pens, twigs and sticks of butter.

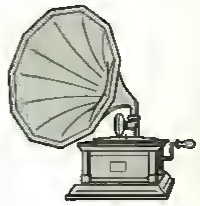
Dave Weathersby (1958)
Encouraged girlfriend to tie sweater around her waist to hide her "big ass."



Jasper Jacoby (1863)
Conceived of "gotcha nose" trick during a rainy night with his nephew. Villagers were so frightened by his illusion they taped teacups over their noses so they wouldn't get stolen while they were asleep.

Lucille Eck (1979)
Briefly posted sign outside Mennonite meetinghouse to ward off nosy tourists. "Wherefore Thy Fascination?" later abbreviated to "WTF?"

Ryan Wendel (1862)
First person to design complete ransom note by cutting individual letters out of assorted newspapers and his sister's Emily Brontë novel, then gluing them onto sheet of parchment. (Note: Wendel was really self conscious about his handwriting.)



Paul Somers and Dale Goodrich (1937)
Following long discussion, togetherer coined phrase "Fuck you" after neighbor repeatedly asked them to turn down Benny Goodman on the phonograph.

Samuel Mansfield (1625)
First to use catchphrase from popular entertainment greeting friends with line "If an oily palm be not a fruitful prognostication, I cannot scratch mine ear!" (*Antony and Cleopatra*, Act I)

Stuart Freyer (1933)
After getting stuck in his squat beneath 295-pound barbell at Atlass World of Iron, invented phrase "Lil' help?"



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